

**The  
Gospel of Matthew  
according to a  
Primitive Hebrew Text**

by  
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*The Gospel of Matthew  
according to a Primitive Hebrew Text*

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To Tere  
*my wife*

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University of Georgia  
29 July 1987

*George Howard*

# Introduction

A complete Hebrew text of Matthew appeared in the body of a fourteenth-century Jewish polemical treatise entitled *Even Bohan* (אֵבֶן בֹּהַן, “The Touchstone”). The author, Shem-Tob ben-Isaac ben-Shaprut (sometimes called Ibn Shaprut), was born in Tudela in Castile in the middle of the fourteenth century. He later settled in Tarazona in Aragon where as a physician he practiced medicine. There he completed the *Even Bohan* about 1380, although he revised it several times—in 1385, around 1400, and even later by adding another five to the original twelve books or sections.<sup>1</sup> Of the original books the first deals with the principles of the Jewish faith, the next nine deal with various passages in the Bible that were disputed by Jews and Christians, the eleventh discusses certain haggadic sections in the Talmud used by Christians or proselytes to Christianity, and the twelfth contains the entire Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew along with polemical comments by Shem-Tob interspersed throughout the text.

Part one of the present volume is a publication of the Hebrew text of Matthew as found in Shem-Tob’s work. A critical apparatus noting manuscript variation accompanies the text, and an English translation appears on facing pages. The polemical comments of Shem-Tob have been eliminated so that the gospel text may run continuously from beginning to end without interruption.

Part two discusses the place of Shem-Tob’s Hebrew Matthew within the Hebrew-Matthew tradition as a whole. In addition it gives a literary and textual profile of the Hebrew Matthew contained in the *Even Bohan*.

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<sup>1</sup>For a discussion of these later additions see Alexander Marx, “The Polemical Manuscripts in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America,” in *Studies in Jewish Bibliography and Related Subjects in Memory of Abraham Solomon Freidus (1867–1923)* (New York: The Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation, 1929) 247–78, esp. 265–70; W. Horbury, “The Revision of Shem Tob Ibn Shaprut’s *Eben Bohan*,” *Sefarad* 43 (1983): 221–37.

### Witnesses Used in This Edition<sup>2</sup>

- Ms. Add. no. 26964. British Library, London. (Serves as the printed text for 1:1–23:22.)
- A Ms. Heb. 28. Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Leiden.
- B Ms. Mich. 119. Bodleian Library, Oxford.
- C Ms. Opp. Add. 4° 72. Bodleian Library, Oxford.
- D Ms. 2426 (Marx 16). Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York. (Serves as the printed text for 23:23–end.)
- E Ms. 2279 (Marx 18). Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York.
- F Ms. 2209 (Marx 19). Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York.
- G Ms. 2234 (Marx 15). Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York.
- H Ms. Mich. 137. Bodleian Library, Oxford.

All the manuscripts date between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries and are written in various types of rabbinic script. By far the best manuscript of the lot (ms C is an exception; see below) is from the British Library, catalogued Add. 26964. Although 26964 is incomplete, covering Matthew 1:1–23:22, the excellent quality of the text demands that it be printed. A second manuscript of good quality, from the library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America catalogued as #2426 (noted as #16 by Marx in "The Polemical Manuscripts in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America," 252), serves as the basic text for Matthew 23:23–28:20. In the apparatus up to 23:23 it is noted as ms D. Ms A from Leiden is of fair quality, but has received considerable revision in regard to improvements in grammar. Moreover, its text has been greatly assimilated to the Greek and Latin. Ms B from the Bodleian Library is of good quality, but because of the type of pen and ink used by the scribe, the letters often run together and are difficult to distinguish. Ms C is an almost exact replica of the British Library manuscript including breaking off at 23:22. It is written, however, in very small letters and is sometimes difficult to read. Mss E and F are almost identical and are of mediocre quality. Ms G is the poorest in quality of all the texts, written in a sloppy hand

<sup>2</sup>For a more complete list of manuscripts see Pinchas E. Lapide, "Der 'Prüfstein' aus Spanien," *Sefarad* 34 (1974): 230.

by a scribe who omitted and added at will. Ms H is fragmentary and contains only 1:18b–19; 2:1, 13, 16–18; 3:16; 4:1; 5:27, 28, 31–34, 38–40, 43–44; 6:5, 19–20; 7:6, 24–28; 9:10–13, 32–38; 11:11–15, 25–28; 12:1, 15–18, 22–29, 31–32, 46–47; 13:53–57; 14:28; 15:1–6, 10b–11, 20b; 16:13–20; 17:1–3; 19:16–18; 21:1–2, 18–19, 23–27; 22:23–24, 29–33; 23:16–18; 24:20, 27–28, 34–35; 26:1, 26–27, 31, 36–37; 27:15; 28:18.

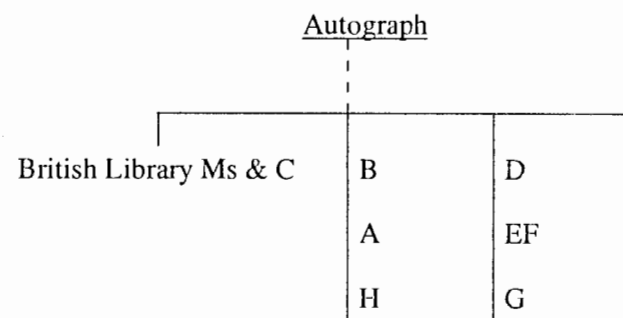
### Interrelationships among the Witnesses

The manuscripts divide themselves into three groups. Group I is made up of the British Library manuscript and C. With a few exceptions the two are virtually identical. Both are carefully copied and show a minimal tendency toward scribal error and assimilation to the Greek and Latin.

Group II consists of A B H. Although they possess individual differences they clearly belong to the same family. They are characterized by careful copying with few scribal errors. They also have a definite tendency for assimilation to the Greek and Latin. B is the best of the group showing less tendency for assimilation than A. H is only fragmentary (see above).

Group III is made up of D E F G. Mss E and F are virtually identical, with D and G often reading with them. The latter two also have many individual differences. The group is characterized by some scribal error and some assimilation to the Greek and Latin. They are, however, less assimilated to the Greek and Latin than group II. D is by far the best of its group and G by far the worst.

The following stemma illustrates the broad lines of the manuscript tradition.



## Text and Apparatus

The present edition does not aim at producing an eclectic text. Until a more complete evaluation of the Shem-Tob Hebrew Matthew is available, plus an accumulation of more manuscripts, the printing of individual manuscripts will serve for a working text. The printed text preserves the British Library manuscript and D in their relevant sections along with their errors and inconsistencies in spelling and grammar. Periods and question marks have been added editorially to the printed Hebrew. In a few instances where the base text has a lacuna, the text of another manuscript is printed within parentheses (for example, 3:10a; 18:2b-5a).

Variants to the printed manuscripts are noted in a critical apparatus. Except for plenary and nonplenary vocalization and a few illegible scribbles the notation of all variants is complete. The limited number of manuscripts in the apparatus, of course, gives only a sampling of the kinds of variation that occur in the manuscript tradition as a whole.

## The Translation

The translation attempts to be faithful to the Hebrew without being slavishly literal. Occasionally its sense is unclear (15:5; 16:21; 17:3) because of the Hebrew. Proper names are usually given their common English spellings except where the pronunciation is clearly indicated by the Hebrew. Example: Petros 18:15 / Peter 19:27. In a number of instances a variant reading, noted in the critical apparatus, has been translated rather than the printed text. This occurs primarily when it appears necessary for the sense of the text. All such renderings are placed within parentheses. In many instances, however, the printed text is translated, in spite of difficulties, so as to preserve a disparity between the Hebrew and the Greek. In no sense is the translation a thoroughgoing eclectic rendering of the manuscript tradition.

## Abbreviations and Notations

- ( ) 1. Notes an occasional reading in the printed text supplied from another manuscript because of a lacuna.
- 2. Notes a variant reading in the translation where the variant is a substitution or an addition. Omissions such as in 9:18 and 10:8 are not so noted.
- [ ] Notes an editorial addition in the translation.

## Part One

# Text and Translation

# **Part Two**

## **Analysis and Commentary**

Part two is devoted to a discussion of the Hebrew Matthew contained in Shem-Tob's *Even Bohan*. In this part we seek first to determine the place of Shem-Tob's Matthew within the Hebrew Matthean tradition spoken of by Papias and other early Gentile Christian writers and alluded to or quoted by early Jewish and anti-Christian authors. The conclusion will be that a primitive form of the Hebrew Matthew contained in the *Even Bohan* was known to Jews and perhaps Jewish Christians in the early medieval period, but not to Gentile Christians. Also in this part a profile is given of the Hebrew Matthew in Shem-Tob in order to demonstrate that an old substratum to the Hebrew represents composition, not translation, and to clarify the relationship between the old substratum and the canonical Greek text.

# The Place of Shem-Tob's Matthew within the Hebrew-Matthean Tradition

## Papias and Other Early Gentile Christian Writers

Papias (ca. 60-130 CE), bishop of Hierapolis in Asia Minor, wrote early in the second century that "Matthew collected the oracles in the Hebrew language, and each interpreted them as best he could" (Ματθαῖος μὲν οὖν Ἑβραϊδί διαλέκτω τὰ λόγια συνετάξατο, ἡρμήνευσεν δ' αὐτὰ ὡς ἦν δυνατός ἕκαστος).<sup>1</sup> Since the time of Widmanstadt,<sup>2</sup> it has

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<sup>1</sup>Eusebius *H.E.* 3.39.16. The text and translation are taken from *The Ecclesiastical History*, ed. and trans. Kirsopp Lake and J. E. L. Oulton, 2 vols., Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1926-1932) 1:296-97. Kürzinger's attempt to prove that Papias was speaking only of Matthew's style of writing, not the language in which he wrote, is not totally convincing. See Josef Kürzinger, "Das Papiaszeugnis und die Erstgestalt des Matthäusevangeliums," *Biblische Zeitschrift* 4 (1960): 19-38; "Irenäus und sein Zeugnis zur Sprache des Matthäusevangeliums," *NTS* 10 (1963): 108-15; "Die Aussage des Papias von Hierapolis zur literarischen Form des Markusevangeliums," *Biblische Zeitschrift* 21 (1977): 245-64; "Papias von Hierapolis: Zu Titel und Art Seines Werkes," *Biblische Zeitschrift* 23 (1979): 172-86; *Papias von Hierapolis und die Evangelien des Neuen Testaments* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1983). Kürzinger's argument, based on the assumption that Papias was using ancient rhetorical terminology, may ascribe more erudition to Papias than he actually had. Eusebius said that it is obvious that Papias was a man of "very little intelligence" (Eusebius *H.E.* 3.39.13). It is also possible that Papias is quoting the "Presbyter" in regard to Matthew as he is in regard to Mark. The rhetorical abilities of the Presbyter are totally unknown. Papias, on the other hand, may not have been referring to the Hebrew Matthean tradition reflected by Shem-Tob's treatise, but to some apocryphal Semitic Gospel.

<sup>2</sup>Johann Albert Widmanstadt, *Liber Sacrosancti Evangelii de Jesu Christo Domino & Deo Nostro . . . characteribus & lingua Syra, Jesu Christo vernacula, Divino ipsius ore consecrata & a Joh. Evangelista Hebraica dicta, Scriptorio Prelo diligenter Expressa* (Wien:

become commonplace to suppose that by "Hebrew" Papias meant "Aramaic." This supposition was due primarily to the belief that Hebrew in the days of Jesus was no longer in use in Palestine but had been replaced by Aramaic. The subsequent discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, many of which are Hebrew compositions, as well as of other Hebrew documents from Palestine from the general time period of Jesus, now show Hebrew to have been alive and well in the first century.<sup>3</sup> There is, therefore, no reason to assume a priori that Papias meant Aramaic.

Whether Papias's "oracles" is a reference to our canonical Matthew or to some other document has been vigorously debated. Kümmel, who surveys the issue, concludes that Papias meant our canonical Matthew but believes that Papias had never actually seen Matthew in a Semitic language and in fact was wrong about the whole matter. "We must concede," he writes, "that the report that Mt was written by Matthew 'in the Hebrew language' is utterly false, however it may have arisen."<sup>4</sup> Whatever the case, the early church writings after the time of Papias are replete with references to an *original Hebrew* Matthew. The following are typical cases.

Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 3.1.1

Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome and laying the foundations of the Church.<sup>5</sup>

M. Cymbermann, 1555). This reference was taken from Jean Carmignac, "Hebrew Translations of the Lord's Prayer: An Historical Survey," in *Biblical and Near Eastern Studies. Essays in Honor of William Sanford LaSor*, ed. Gary A. Tuttle (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1978) 71n5.

<sup>3</sup>For an up-to-date discussion of the languages of Palestine see especially Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula MT: Scholars Press, 1979) 29-56. See also Pinchas Lapide, "Insights from Qumran into the Language of Jesus," *Revue de Qumran* 32 (1975): 483-501; James Barr, "Which Language Did Jesus Speak?—Some Remarks of a Semitist," *BJRL* 53 (1970): 9-29; W. Chomsky, "What Was the Jewish Vernacular During the Second Commonwealth?" *JQR* 42 (1951-1952): 193-212; J. A. Emerton, "Did Jesus Speak Hebrew?" *JTS* 12 (1961): 189-202; "The Problem of Vernacular Hebrew in the First Century A.D. and the Language of Jesus," *JTS* 24 (1973): 1-23; Harris Birkeland, *The Language of Jesus* (Oslo: I. Kommissjon Hos Jacob Dybwad, 1954); Jean Carmignac, "Studies in the Hebrew Background of the Synoptic Gospels," *ASTI* 7 (1970): 64-93.

<sup>4</sup>W. G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament*, rev. ed., trans. Howard Clark Kee (Nashville: Abingdon, 1975) 49, 120-21.

<sup>5</sup>Translation taken from *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (reprint: Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1985) 1:414.

Origen as quoted by Eusebius, *H.E.* 6.25.4

As having learnt by tradition concerning the four Gospels, which alone are unquestionable in the Church of God under heaven, that first was written that according to Matthew, who was once a tax collector but afterwards an apostle of Jesus Christ, who published it for those who from Judaism came to believe, composed as it was in the Hebrew language.<sup>6</sup>

Eusebius, *H.E.* 3.24.6

Matthew had first preached to Hebrews, and when he was on the point of going to others he transmitted in writing in his native language the Gospel according to himself, and thus supplied by writing the lack of his own presence to those from whom he was sent.<sup>7</sup>

There are other such references but these are sufficient to demonstrate an early belief in the Hebrew originality of Matthew.

In addition to such statements, there are others that refer either to Matthew or to an apocryphal gospel in Hebrew sometimes identified or confused with Matthew. Epiphanius (ca. 315-403 CE), bishop of Salamis, in his *Panarion* (30.13.1-30.22.4; also cited as *Haereses*) speaks of a gospel used by the Ebionites. Elsewhere he says the Ebionites use the Gospel of Matthew and call it "According to the Hebrews" (κατὰ Ἑβραίων; *Panarion* 30.3.7). Epiphanius explains this as an appropriate name since Matthew issued his gospel in Hebrew and with Hebrew letters (Ἑβραϊστὶ καὶ Ἑβραϊκοῖς γράμμασιν; *Panarion* 30.3.7). In another context he again mentions the Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew and says it is preserved in Hebrew letters (*Panarion* 29.9.4). Epiphanius further says it is "incomplete, corrupt, and mutilated" (*Panarion* 30.13.2).

Epiphanius also gives seven quotations from this gospel in his *Panarion* (30.13.2-3, 30.13.4-5, 30.13.6, 30.13.7-8, 30.14.5, 30.16.5, 30.22.4). A recent study of these quotations shows that they do not come from Matthew but from a harmonized account made primarily from the canonical gospels and based on the Greek text of these gospels.<sup>8</sup> Most important for our purposes is the fact that they do not touch base with Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. Whatever the origin of the document used by the Ebionites, it has no particular relationship to our Hebrew Matthew.

<sup>6</sup>Translation from the LCL edition, 2:75.

<sup>7</sup>Translation from the LCL edition, 1:251.

<sup>8</sup>See Daniel A. Bertrand, "L'évangile des ébionites: une harmonie évangélique antérieure au Diatessaron," *NTS* 26 (1980): 548-63.

Jerome makes reference to a Hebrew Matthew and to a Gospel according to the Hebrews in such a way as to be unclear as to whether these are one and the same. In *Epist.* 20.5 he writes: "Finally, Matthew, who wrote the Gospel in the Hebrew language, put it in the following way: Osianna barrama, which means ossana in excelsis." The reference is to Matt 21:9 which in the form quoted by Jerome has no particular relationship to the text of Shem-Tob. In *Epist.* 120.8, Jerome writes: "But in the gospel which is written in Hebrew letters we read that not the curtain of the temple but the upper threshold of the temple, being of marvelous size, fell down." It is unclear whether this is the same gospel as the one mentioned above; but, if so, this form of the text has no parallel in Matthew in either the Greek text or that of Shem-Tob. Again, in *Matth.* 12.13, Jerome writes: "In the Gospel which the Nazoraeans and the Ebionites use which we translated recently from Hebrew to Greek and which is called the authentic text of Matthew by a good many, it is written that the man with the withered hand is a mason, praying for help with words of this kind: 'I was a mason earning my living with my hands, I pray you, Jesus, to restore my health lest I must beg shamefully for my food.' " There is no exact parallel to this in Matthew in either the Greek or Hebrew texts. In *adv. Pelag.* 3.2 Jerome writes: "In the Gospel according to the Hebrews which was written in the Chaldaic and Syriac language but with Hebrew letters, and is used up to the present day by the Nazoraeans, I mean that according to the Apostles, or, as many maintain, according to Matthew. . . ." In the quotations that follow there is no particular relationship to Shem-Tob.

There are many other such references in Jerome and elsewhere but further citation of these would be of little benefit. The fact is that the quotations from the so-called Hebrew Matthew, the Gospel of the Hebrews, the Gospel of the Nazoraeans, the Gospel of the Ebionites, or the Gospel of the Twelve Apostles<sup>10</sup> mentioned in early church writings, yield little evi-

<sup>10</sup>The above quotations from Epiphanius and Jerome have been taken from A. F. J. Klijn and G. J. Reinink, *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects* (Leiden: Brill, 1973).

<sup>11</sup>For a discussion of these see Edgar Hennecke, *The New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. W. Schneemelcher, trans. R. McL. Wilson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1959) 1:118-65. In addition to the bibliography already cited above, see A. S. Barnes, "The Gospel according to the Hebrews," *JTS* 6 (1905): 356-71; M. E. Boismard, "Évangile des ébionites et problème synoptique (Mc, I, 2-6 ET Par.)," *Revue Biblique* 73 (1966): 321-52; Oscar Cullmann, "Ebioniten-evangelium," *RGK*, Zweiter Band, 298; Jean Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, trans. J. A. Baker (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd,

dence of any relationship to Shem-Tob's Matthew. This is true with two possible exceptions:

### 1. Jerome in *Matth.* 2.5

And they said to him: "In Bethlehem of Juda." Here there is an error on the part of the copyist: for we believe that the evangelist in his first edition wrote, as we read in the original Hebrew: "Juda" and not "Judaea" (Iudae, non Iudeae).<sup>11</sup>

This corresponds to the reading of Shem-Tob (according to mss BDEFG) at Matt 2:5, **ΚΤΙ**.

### 2. Jerome in *Isaiah* 11.2

And it came to pass, when the Lord had come up from the water, the entire

1964) 55-64; Martin Dibelius, *Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur* (Berlin/Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter, 1926); E. Fabbri, "El bautismo de Jesús en el Evangelio de los Hebreas y en de los Ebionitas," *Revista de Teología* 6 (1956): 36-55; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Qumran Scrolls, the Ebionites, and Their Literature," *TS* 16 (1955): 335-72 (reprinted in Fitzmyer's *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* [Missoula MT: Scholars Press, 1974] 435-80); Rudolf Handmann, *Das Hebräer-Evangelium. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte und Kritik des hebräischen Matthäus* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1888); Adolf Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1958) 205-209; Harris Hirschberg, "Simon Bariona and the Ebionites," *JBL* 61 (1942) 171-91; M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924) 8-10; A. F. J. Klijn, "The Question of the Rich Young Man in a Jewish-Christian Gospel," *Novum Testamentum* 8 (1966): 149-55; M. J. Lagrange, "L'Évangile selon les Hébreux," *Revue Biblique* 31 (1922): 161-81, 321-49; Adolf Hilgenfeld, *Evangeliorum secundum Hebraeos*, etc. (Lipsiae: T. O. Weigel, 1866, 1884); Allan Menzies, "Gospel according to the Hebrews," in *A Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1904) 5:338-43; W. G. Most, "Gospel of the Ebionites," in *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion*, ed. P. K. Meagher et al. (Washington DC: Corpus Publications, 1979) A-E:215; J. Munck, "Jewish Christianity in Post Apostolic Times," *NTS* 6 (1959-1960): 103-16; Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* (Utrecht-Antwerp: Spectrum, 1964) 1:113-14; A. Schlundtke, *Neue Fragmente zu den judenchristlichen Evangelien*, TU 37 (Leipzig, 1911); "Zum Hebräerevangelium," *ZNW* 35 (1936): 24-44; H. J. Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1949); *Jewish Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969); G. Strecker, *Das Judenchristentum in den Pseudoklementinen*, TU 70 (1958) D:117-36; J. L. Teicher, "The Dead Sea Scrolls—Documents of the Jewish-Christian Sect of Ebionites," *JJS* 2 (1951): 67-99; H. Waitz, "Das Evangelium des zwölf Apostel," *ZNW* 14 (1913): 48ff.; "Neue Untersuchungen über die sogenannten judenchristlichen Evangelien," *ZNW* 36 (1937): 60-81; L. St. Alban Wells, "Gospels (Apocrypha)," in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings (New York: Scribner's, 1928) 5:347-48; B. F. Westcott, *An Introduction to the Study of the Gospels* (London: Macmillan, 1895) 471-73; Theodor von Zahn, *Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons* (Erlangen: A. Deichert, 1888-1892).

<sup>11</sup>Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, 214-15.



fountain of the Holy Spirit descended and *rested* upon him (et requievit super eum) and said to him.<sup>12</sup>

This reference is to Matt 3:16, where the word “rested,” contrary to the Greek ἐσχόμενον, agrees with Shem-Tob’s ושרתה “and dwelt” and Sy<sup>s.c</sup> וקוית “and abode.”

The question is, do these minor readings establish a relationship between Shem-Tob’s Matthew and the Hebrew Matthew or apocryphal Hebrew gospels referred to in early Gentile Christian literature? It seems they do not. The overlaps are too few and insignificant to establish such a relationship. The evidence strongly suggests that none of the gospels referred to in early Gentile Christian literature relates in any particular way to the Hebrew Matthew in Shem-Tob. This text stands apart from all others.

### Du Tillet, Münster, and Allusions to and Quotations from Matthew in Early Jewish and Anti-Christian Writings

Although the Hebrew Matthew of Shem-Tob is the earliest complete Hebrew text of the Gospel known, earlier Jewish and anti-Christian writings quote Matthew in Hebrew suggesting the possibility of an earlier date for a Hebrew text than the fourteenth century. Four of the most important of these writings to which we will refer are: (1) the Book of Nestor (perhaps between the sixth and ninth centuries);<sup>13</sup> (2) the Milhamot HaShem by Jacob ben Reuben (1170);<sup>14</sup> (3) Sepher Joseph Hamekane by Rabbi Joseph ben Nathan Official (thirteenth century);<sup>15</sup> and (4) the Nizzahon Ve-

<sup>12</sup>Taken from Edward Byron Nicholson, *The Gospel according to the Hebrews* (London: C. Kegan Paul, 1879) 43.

<sup>13</sup>This is according to Pinchas E. Lapide, *Hebrew in the Church*, trans. E. F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1984) 23. The text may be found in J. D. Eisenstein, (ישראל), *אוצר וכוחים*, (1969) 310-15. The editor there (310) dates it in the ninth century.

<sup>14</sup>ישראל: מוסד הרב קוק (1963) viii. יעקב בן ראובן. *מלחמות השם*. See also Judah Rosenthal, *תרגום של הבשורה על-פי מתי ליעקב בן ראובן*, *Tarbiz* 32 (1962): 48-66.

<sup>15</sup>Judah Rosenthal, *ספר יוסף המקנה* (Jerusalem, 1970) 17. Ms. Or. #53 of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Rome includes material quite close to the Paris manuscript of Sepher Joseph Hamekane. See E. E. Urback, “Études sur la littérature polémique au moyen-âge,” *Revue des études juives* C (1935): 49-77. Judah Rosenthal published the material on the gospels in Ms. Or. Rome #53 in *המאה מן החדשה של הברית החדשה מן המאה* in *בקורת יהודית של הברית החדשה מן המאה* in *Studies in Jewish Bibliography, History, and Literature in Honor of I. Edward Kiev*, ed. Charles Berlin (New York: KTAV, 1971) 123-39.

tus (latter part of the thirteenth century).<sup>16</sup> A comparison of the quotations from Matthew in these writings with the text of Shem-Tob reveals an occasional unique textual link between them. Examples of this will be given below. For now it may be stated with some certainty that at least some portions of the Hebrew Matthew contained in Shem-Tob’s *Even Bohan* pre-date the fourteenth century, being reflected sporadically in these earlier anti-Christian writings.

Considerable confusion exists between the Hebrew Matthew contained in Shem-Tob’s *Even Bohan* and the Hebrew versions of Matthew published by Sebastian Münster and Jean du Tillet. Münster’s versions appeared in 1537 under the title תורת המשיח (The Torah of the Messiah).<sup>17</sup> Published in a folio volume, it was dedicated to King Henry VIII of England. In the letter of dedication Münster reported he had received the Hebrew Matthew from the Jews in defective form with many lacunae and had, from necessity, restored what was lacking in the manuscript. Münster failed, however, to mark the passages he had restored so that now, unfortunately, his work is of limited value.

Du Tillet’s version of Matthew in Hebrew appeared in print in 1555. Accompanied by the Latin translation of Jean Mercier, it was published in Paris by the firm of Martin Le Jeune. The letter of dedication to the Cardinal of Lorraine, Charles de Guise, explains that the basis for the text is a manuscript that du Tillet found among the Jews in Italy in 1553. The manuscript now resides in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris catalogued under Hebrew Mss. No. 132.<sup>18</sup>

As early as 1690 Richard Simon mistakenly identified the text of Matthew in Shem-Tob with the versions of Münster and du Tillet.<sup>19</sup> This confusion has persisted since the time of Simon. In 1879 Adolf Herbst issued a new printing of du Tillet’s text accompanied by an introduction and vari-

<sup>16</sup>David Berger, *The Jewish-Christian Debate in the High Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979) 33.

<sup>17</sup>Sebastian Münster, *Evangelium secundum Matthaeum in lingua Hebraica, cum versione latina atque succinctis annotationibus* (Basiliae, 1537).

<sup>18</sup>For more information on this version, including my assessment of it, see George Howard, “The Textual Nature of an Old Hebrew Version of Matthew,” *JBL* 105 (1986): 49-63. For an English translation see Hugh J. Schonfield, *An Old Hebrew Text of St. Matthew’s Gospel* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1927).

<sup>19</sup>Richard Simon, *Histoire Critique des Versions du Nouveau Testament* (Rotterdam: R. Leers, 1690) 231.

ants from Münster's text in a volume entitled *Des Schemtob ben Schaphrut hebraeische Übersetzung des Evangeliums Matthaei nach den Drucken des S. Münster und J. du Tillet-Mercier*.<sup>20</sup> The title gives away the author's belief that the texts of Münster and du Tillet are basically reproductions of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. Herbst also stated his conviction that the source for the Hebrew text was the Latin Vulgate.<sup>21</sup> His conclusions were not drawn from his own extensive research into the textual nature of the Hebrew but from earlier scholars whom he cited at length. He excused himself from making an extensive study into the variants because of his lack of materials and opportunity for doing so.<sup>22</sup> As late as 1967 Herbst's confusion of these texts was followed by Matthew Black who says in regard to du Tillet's version that "the author of the Hebrew Matthew was probably a certain Shem-Tob ben Shaprut, a famous Jewish polemical writer who flourished in Spain in the fourteenth century."<sup>23</sup>

The present edition of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew should forever dispel any belief in its identity with the texts of Münster and du Tillet. Shem-Tob's independent nature was, of course, already proven in 1929 by Alexander Marx in his comparison of texts in a few passages.<sup>24</sup> A comparison now of all the texts will support his previous conclusion. An extensive comparison, however, will reveal something in addition: despite their vast differences in vocabulary and style, a large number of unique or almost

<sup>20</sup>Göttingen: Dieterichsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1879.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 16.

<sup>22</sup>"Die Quelle der Übersetzung ist, wie schon einige theologische Einleitungen bemerkt haben, die Vulgata. Es ist mir nicht möglich, mich auf eine genauere Durchforschung der Varianten einzulassen, welche die von mir edierte Übersetzung darbietet. Einmal nicht, weil mir die nöthigen Hilfsmittel oder doch die Musse und Gelegenheit sie aufzusuchen und zu benutzen fehlt, sodann nicht, weil eine erschöpfende Behandlung des Gegenstandes zu umfänglich werden würde. Ich beschränke mich daher auf einige wenige Bemerkungen, welche irgend welche Ansprüche nicht machen." Ibid., 16.

<sup>23</sup>Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967) 295. Cf. Robert L. Lindsey, *A Hebrew Translation of the Gospel of Mark* (Jerusalem: Dugith Publishers, n.d.) 67, who identifies S. Münster's edition as a version of "Ibn Shaprut's translation."

<sup>24</sup>Marx, "The Polemical Manuscripts in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America," 270-73. Cf. Lapide, *Hebrew in the Church*, 55: "And yet with even the most superficial comparison of the two works the radical differences between their vocabulary, style, and diction would have demonstrated the impossibility of a common origin."

unique readings exists between Shem-Tob and du Tillet (and occasionally Münster). These are sufficiently important to justify the following sampling of passages.<sup>25</sup>

#### MATT 2:12

Greek	VOID
Shem-Tob	מהמלאך by the angel
du Tillet	המלאך the angel
Protev. Jacobi	ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀγγέλου by the angel
Geo <sup>B</sup>	ab angelo

#### MATT 2:22

Greek	εἰς τὰ μέρη τῆς Γαλιλαίας into the region of Galilee
Shem-Tob	אל ארץ הגלגל unto the land of Gilgal
du Tillet	אל ארץ הגליל unto the land of Galilee
Münster	אל ארץ גליל unto the land of Galilee

#### MATT 3:11

Greek	αὐτὸς ὑμᾶς βαπτίσει ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρὶ he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire
Shem-Tob	והוא יטביל אתכם באש רוח הקודש he will baptize you with the fire of the Holy Spirit
du Tillet	והוא יטבל אתכם באש ריח הקדש he will baptize you with the fire of the Holy Spirit

#### MATT 6:16

Greek	ἀπέχουσιν τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν they have received their reward
Shem-Tob	שכבר קבלו שכרם they have already received their reward
du Tillet	כבר קבלו שכרם they have already received their reward

<sup>25</sup>For Münster I have relied on the apparatus in Herbst's edition of du Tillet.

## MATT 8:21

Greek	ἕτερος δὲ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ another of his disciples
Shem-Tob	ואחד מתלמידיו one of his disciples
du Tillet/ Münster Joseph/ Ms Or Rome #53	ואחד מתלמידיו one of his disciples

## MATT 9:2

Greek	θάρασει τέκνον courage child
Shem-Tob	בני תחזק courage my son
du Tillet/ Münster	בני בטח trust my son

## MATT 10:2-3

Greek	James and John . . . Philip and Bartholomew
Shem-Tob	Philip and Bartholomew . . . James and John
du Tillet/ Münster	Philip and Bartholomew . . . James and John

## MATT 10:5

Greek	καὶ εἰς πόλιν Σαμαρειτῶν μὴ εἰσελθῆτε and do not enter into the city of the Samaritans
Shem-Tob	ובערי השמרונים אל תבואו and do not enter into the cities of the Samaritans
du Tillet/ Münster	ואל ערי השמרונים לא תבואו and do not enter into the cities of the Samaritans

## MATT 14:21

Greek	οἱ δὲ ἐσθίοντες ἦσαν ἄνδρες ὥσει πεντακισχίλιοι those who ate were about 5,000 men
Shem-Tob	ויהי מספר האוכלים חמשת אלפים אנשים the number of those who ate was 5,000 men
du Tillet/ Münster	ומספר האוכלים היה חמשת אלפי איש the number of those who ate was 5,000 men

Such agreements can hardly be the result of coincidence. This list of readings, which could easily be expanded to include scores of other examples, establishes a textual link between Shem-Tob, du Tillet, and occasionally Münster. The situation suggests that the texts of du Tillet and Münster rest on an earlier literary Hebrew tradition, reflected to some de-

gree by Shem-Tob. Generally speaking, however, these texts as a whole have undergone extensive modification and revision away from the older base primarily in two ways: (1) stylistic modification and (2) revision designed to bring the Hebrew into closer harmony with the current Greek and Latin texts. Most stylistic modification consists of improvements in grammar and the substitution of synonymous words and phrases. Revisions designed to bring the Hebrew into closer harmony with the Greek and Latin were apparently for the purpose of establishing a common textual base for discussion and debate between Jews and Christians.

These changes are best understood when they are placed in a chronological sequence beginning with Hebrew quotations from Matthew in early Jewish and anti-Christian writings, continuing through Shem-Tob, and ending with readings from du Tillet. When these texts are placed together in this order a gradual evolution in the Hebrew tradition becomes evident including both stylistic changes and changes that bring the Hebrew into closer harmony with the current Greek and Latin. Logic would suggest that each successive stage in the chronological sequence would produce a text closer to the Greek and Latin and further from the dissident primitive Hebrew. Although this is generally true, the stages of development do not always arrange themselves quite so neatly, thus indicating that individual manuscripts of our documents are not themselves related directly to each other but rather reflect a complicated literary Hebrew tradition. The following examples are typical cases. In each instance two things will be evident: (1) a textual relationship running throughout all or part of the Hebrew tradition; and (2) a textual evolution (generally based on chronological sequence of documents) in the direction of the Greek/Latin tradition.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup>Some clarification is needed at this point. Although these examples are typical and represent a sampling of a larger whole, it is not the case that each Hebrew quotation from Matthew in medieval Jewish documents shows a relationship to the Shem-Tob Matthean tradition. In many instances the quotations appear to be ad hoc translations of the Greek or Latin texts freshly prepared for the occasion. It is in fact the tendency to translate directly from the Greek or Latin that eventually contaminated the primitive Hebrew Matthean tradition when it too was subjected to the influence of the canonical text through the process of revision.

## Sequential Evolution in the Literary Hebrew Tradition

## MATT 3:5

Greek (= Vg)	καὶ πᾶσα ἡ περιχώρος τοῦ Ἰορδάνου and all the region about the Jordan
Joseph	וממלכות על הירדן and the kingdom by the Jordan
Ms Or Rome #53 <sup>27</sup>	וכל הממלכות עד הירדן and all the kingdom unto the Jordan
Nizzahon Vetus #160	וכל המלכות עד הירדן and all the kingdom unto the Jordan
Shem-Tob	ומכל המלכות סביבות הירדן and from all the kingdom about the Jordan
du Tillet	וכל מחוז הירדן and all the district of the Jordan

The unusual textual link running throughout the Hebrew tradition (with the exception of du Tillet) is the reading of הממלכות ממלכות in Joseph and Ms Or Rome # 53 and המלכות in Nizzahon Vetus and Shem-Tob. Modification toward the Greek and Latin appears in the reading of וכל or מכל in Ms Or Rome #53, Nizzahon Vetus, Shem-Tob, and du Tillet in agreement with πᾶσα. Shem-Tob further reads סביבות in correspondence with περιχώρος. Finally, du Tillet abandoning the unique מלכות ממלכות and reading the Medieval מחוז (= περιχώρος) converges with the Greek and Latin.

## MATT 4:1

Greek (= Vg)	τότε ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνήχθη εἰς τὴν ἔρημον ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος περιπασθῆναι ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου then Jesus was led up into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil
Nestor	ישו היה בורח מן השטן Jesus was fleeing from Satan
ben Reuben	או נהג אל המדבר ברוח שטן להתנסות then he was led unto the wilderness by the spirit of Satan to be tempted

<sup>27</sup>See n. 15 above.

Nizzahon Vetus #162	שהובא ישו במדבר וניסהו השטן Jesus was led into the wilderness that Satan might tempt him
Shem-Tob	או לוקח ישו ברוח הקדוש למדבר להתנסות מהשטן then Jesus was taken by the Holy Spirit to the wilderness to be tempted by Satan
du Tillet	או הובא ישו במדבר יהודה על ידי רוח למען ינסה מהשטן then Jesus was led into the wilderness of Judea by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan

An element of continuity in the Hebrew tradition is the reading of "Satan" rather than "devil." This agrees with the parallel in Mark 1:13 and may represent an early harmonistic tendency in the Hebrew or a primitive form in the gospel tradition reflected by these two independent compositions. Another element of continuity in the Hebrew is the peculiar reading of בורח ("fleeing") in Nestor and the visually similar ברוח ("by the Spirit") in ben Reuben and Shem-Tob. The difference represents only a metathesis of letters that brings the latter two into harmony with the Greek ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος. The similarity of Nestor's reading with the theoretical Hebrew substratum to the Greek, reflected by ben Reuben and Shem-Tob, suggests the existence of variant forms based on a visual similarity of letters in the earliest period of the synoptic tradition. Revision toward the Greek and Latin is evidenced by various elements in the Hebrew. או in ben Reuben, Shem-Tob, and du Tillet corresponds to τότε. All Hebrew texts except Nestor have a correspondent for ἀνέχθη: ניהג, לוקח, and הובא. All Hebrew texts except Nestor have correspondents for περιπασθῆναι and εἰς τὴν ἔρημον by reading some form of נסה ("to tempt") and מדבר ("wilderness"). The revisions, however, are gradual. After Nestor, ben Reuben is farthest from the Greek and Latin by lacking "Jesus," and in reading "by the spirit of Satan." Nizzahon Vetus is next in distance by lacking "by the Spirit," and by reading the active "Satan tempted him." Although Shem-Tob and du Tillet are close to the Greek and Latin, the former reads "Holy" and the latter "Judah" against the canonical text. Du Tillet is slightly the closer of the two by containing the order "wilderness . . . Spirit" in agreement with the Greek and Latin against Shem-Tob's "Spirit . . . wilderness."

## MATT 5:17-18a

Greek (= Vg)	μη νομίσητε ὅτε ἦλθον καταλῦσαι τὸν νόμον ἢ τοὺς προφῆτας· οὐκ ἦλθον καταλῦσαι ἀλλὰ πληρῶσαι. ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For, truly, I say to you
b. Shabb. 116	אנא לא למיפחת מן אורייתא דמשה אתיתי ולא לאוספו על אורייתא דמשה אתיתי I am not come to take away from the Law of Moses and I am not come to add to the Law of Moses.
Nestor	אני לא באתי לסתור ולא להחסיר דבר מתורת משה והנביאים כי אם באתי להשלים בדברי אמת I have not come to cancel or to subtract from the Law of Moses and the prophets but I have come to fulfil the words of truth.
Ms. Or Rome #53	אל תחשבו שבאתי לעקור התורה והנביאים לא באתי כ"א לקיים אמת. אני אומר לכם Do not think that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have not come except to fulfil truth. I say to you
Nizzahon Vetus # 157	לא באתי לחסור על תורת משה I have not come to diminish the Law of Moses
Nizzahon Vetus #71	לא באתי לבטל תורת משה ודברי הנביאים אלא להשלימם I have not come to abolish the Law of Moses or the words of the prophets but to fulfil them
Nizzahon Vetus #221	שלא בא לעקור תורת משה ולא דברי הנביאים I have not come to remove the Law of Moses of the words of the prophets
Shem-Tob	אל תחשבו שבאתי להפר תורה אלא להשלים באמת אני אומר לכם Do not think that I have come to annul the law but to fulfil. Truly I say to you
Shem-Tob (Comment after 6:1)	אין בכל אלו המאמרים להוסיף דבר על דברי תורה ולא להסר in all these words not to add a word to the words of the law nor to subtract any
du Tillet	אל תחשבו שבאתי לבטל את התורה או את הנביאים לא באתי לבטל אלא למלא אמן אני אומר לכם Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have not come to abolish but to fulfil. Truly I say to you

The Aramaic statement found in b. Shabb. 116<sup>b</sup> is among the few such quotations or allusions to the New Testament in the Babylonian Gemara.<sup>28</sup> It says: "I am not come to take away from the Law of Moses and I am not come to add to the Law of Moses." It appears within an anecdote about a judge, probably a Jewish Christian, who refers to the gospel in his decisions. That his quotation is actually from Matt 5:17 is doubtful since an earlier "gospel" quotation from him, that is, "A son and a daughter shall inherit alike," is not from Matthew or any of the canonical gospels, and since the present quotation is said to come at the end of the book. Herford suggests the saying may have come from a logia source in which various sayings of Jesus were collected.<sup>29</sup> Whatever the case, the saying is close enough to Matt 5:17 to suggest a connection to it. There are three major elements of continuity between the Aramaic and the Hebrew. The first is the name "Moses," which appears in the Gemara reading as well as in Nestor and Nizzahon Vetus. It is lacking in Ms Or Rome #53, Shem-Tob, and du Tillet. The second is the Gemara reading of למיפחת, "to take away," and the reading of להחסיר in Nestor, לחסור in Nizzahon Vetus # 157, and להסר in Shem-Tob's comment, all of which have the same basic meaning. The third is the similarity between the Gemara reading and the allusion to it in Shem-Tob's comment after 6:1. In his comment Shem-Tob says that the intention of Jesus was "in all these words not to add a word to the words of the law nor to subtract any." This, of course, differs from Shem-Tob's reading in 5:17 in the biblical sequence, but in all probability reflects his original text. It was common for scribes to revise a lemma citation of a biblical text in ancient documents without bothering to revise in a corresponding way subsequent comments that repeat the quotation or parts of it or, at least, allude to it.<sup>30</sup> The evidence, therefore, suggests that Shem-Tob knew this passage in its Gemara form (though with some variation, as, for example, the transposition of the order of "add . . . subtract") and

<sup>28</sup>For a discussion of these see R. Travers Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash* (Clifton NJ: Reference Book, 1966).

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 151.

<sup>30</sup>A good example of this is to be found in mss UF and sometimes L of Philo. See Peter Katz, *Philo's Bible. The Aberrant Text of Bible Quotations in Some Philonic Writings and Its Place in the Textual History of the Greek Bible* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950). For some corrective to Katz see George Howard, "The 'Aberrant' Text of Philo's Quotations Reconsidered," *HUCA* 44 (1973): 197-209.

that the reading, as it stands in his text at Matt 5:17, is due to scribal alteration designed to make it correspond more closely to the Greek/Latin.

Modification toward the Greek and Latin is evidenced in the sequence of Hebrew readings. All the documents except Shem-Tob's comment after 6:1 read the following: (1) some form of "abolish" (that is, לעקור, לסתור) (להפך, לבטל) in agreement with καταλῦσας, (2) "prophets" (mss A and D only in Shem-Tob's revised text) in agreement with προφήτας, (3) "fulfil" (that is, להשלים, לקיים, להשלים, למלא) in agreement with πληρῶσαι. A further revisionary element appearing in some Hebrew readings seems to be אמת in Nestor and Ms Or Rome #53, באמת in Shem-Tob's revised text, and אמן in du Tillet—all in some way or other corresponding to ἀμήν in 5:18. Of all the texts cited, du Tillet is the closest to the Greek and Latin and apparently represents the end result of a long revisionary process.

The relationship between the various texts involved—the Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek/Latin—is an interesting one. The most important difference between the Greek/Latin and Hebrew (including Shem-Tob's revised text), on the one hand, and the Aramaic and the reading in Shem-Tob's comment, on the other, is that the former read both a negative and a positive statement in regard to the purpose of Jesus' coming. The Greek/Latin, for example, says that Jesus came not "to abolish" but "to fulfil." All the Hebrew documents follow suit (Nizzahon Vetus #157 and #221 lack the second element, but #71 contains it), reading both the negative and the positive. The Aramaic and the reading in Shem-Tob's comment contain only a double negative statement, that is, Jesus came not "to subtract or to add." The positive element apparently belongs to the Greek/Latin tradition only, and the correspondence to it in the Hebrew readings represent textual accommodation to the Greek/Latin. Accommodation, however, came gradually. Nestor, the earliest Hebrew witness, reads, "I have not come to cancel (= καταλῦσαι) or to subtract (= Aramaic למיפחת). All other Hebrew witnesses, except Shem-Tob's comment, read "cancel/abolish/remove/annul" but not "subtract." The element "to subtract" in most readings thus was eliminated in the revisionary process reflected in most readings in the Hebrew tradition. It is not possible to explain all the factors involved in the separation of the Greek and Aramaic forms, but conceivably an original Aramaic לאוספי ("to add") was misread for לאספי ("to end") and this gave rise to the Greek καταλῦσαι ("to abolish").<sup>31</sup>

## MATT 5:39

Greek (not = Vg)	ἀλλ' ὅστις σε ῥαπίζει εἰς τὴν δεξιὰν σιαγόνα σου, στρέψον αὐτῷ καὶ τὴν ἄλλην But whoever strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also
Nestor	אם יכך אדם בצד ימין התר לו את שמאלך להכות בו If a man should strike you on the right side permit him to strike your left
ben Reuben	אם יכך אדם על לחיך נטה לו האחרת If a man should strike you on your cheek turn to him the other
Nizzahon Vetus #232	אם יכך יהודי בלחי נטה לו לחי האחרת If a Jew should strike you on the cheek turn to him the other cheek
Shem-Tob	אבל המכה בלחיך הימין הכן לו השמאל But whoever strikes your right cheek provide for him the left
du Tillet	אלא אם יהיה שייךך על הלחי הימנית תטה אליו האחרת But if there shall be one who strikes you on the right cheek turn to him the other

Nestor's text differs from the Greek in several respects. Primary for our purpose is his reading of (1) אם ("if") for ἀλλ' ὅστις ("but whoever"), (2) צד (ב) ("side") for σιαγόνα ("cheek"), (3) התר ("permit") for στρέψον ("turn"), and (4) שמאלך ("your left") for ἄλλην ("other"). Nestor's text is in basic agreement (though not exactly) with certain Old Latin manuscripts and even less with Vg which read, *Sed si quis te percusserit in dexteram maxillam tuam, praebe illi et sinistram*. In addition, Nestor agrees with Marcion's reading at Luke 6:29: ἐὰν τίς σε ῥαπίσῃ εἰς. (Cf. Did. 1:4: ἐὰν τίς σοι δῶ ῥαπισμα).

Continuity in the Hebrew tradition is in the readings of אם (Nestor, ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, du Tillet), אדם (Nestor, ben Reuben), and שמאלך (Nestor, Shem-Tob).

Various elements of revision appear in the Hebrew readings. לחי ("cheek") in agreement with σιαγόνα appears in ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, Shem-Tob, and du Tillet. נטה ("turn") in agreement with στρέψον appears in ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, and du Tillet. האחרת ("the

<sup>31</sup>A similar confusion of the Hebrew roots סוף ("to end") and יסף ("to add") appears in Amos 3:15: MT ויספו is rendered by LXX καὶ προστεθήσονται = וינוספו.

other'') in agreement with την ἄλλην appears in ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, and du Tillet. אבל המכה in agreement with ἄλλ' ὅστις appears in Shem-Tob and אלא = ἄλλ' in du Tillet.

## MATT 8:4

Greek (= Vg)	δ προσέταξεν Μωϋσῆς εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς which Moses commanded for a witness to them
Nestor	כאשר ציה ה' את משה as the LORD commanded Moses
Joseph	כאשר ציה משה בתורתו as Moses commanded in his law
Ms Or Rome #53	כאשר צוה משה בתורתו as Moses commanded in his law
Nizzahon Vetus #166	כאשר ציוה משה בתורתו as Moses commanded in his law
Shem-Tob	כאשר צוה משה בתורתכם as Moses commanded in your law
du Tillet	כאשר ציה משה להם לעדות as Moses commanded them for a witness

A continuity in the Hebrew tradition is seen in the reading כאשר ('as') in agreement with καθὼς in the Lukan parallel (Luke 5:14) and in disagreement with ὃ ('which') in Matthew. Continuity is again seen in the Hebrew tradition, with the exception of Nestor (who simply breaks off after משה leaving us in doubt whether his text read further at this point or not) and du Tillet, in the unique reading of 'in his/your law' in disagreement with the Greek and Latin 'for a witness to them.' Du Tillet's להם לעדות is clearly a revision toward the Greek and Latin.

The first difference between the Greek and Hebrew may be explained by a confusion in an early Hebrew tradition based on אשר ('which'), reflected in Matthew's ὃ, and כאשר ('as'), reflected in Luke's καθὼς and the Hebrew quotations listed above. The second difference may be explained as a confusion in an early Hebrew tradition of the roots תורה ('law') and תעודה ('witness'). The difference in these words is the additional ayin in 'witness' and the reading of *daleth* instead of *resh*. The latter two letters are often confused in ancient manuscripts.

## MATT 12:30, 32

Greek (= Vg)	<sup>30</sup> καὶ ὁ μὴ συνάγων μετ' ἐμοῦ σκορπίζει . . . <sup>32</sup> καὶ ὃς ἐὰν εἴπῃ λόγον κατὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἁφεθήσεται αὐτῷ <sup>30</sup> and he who does not gather with me scatters . . . <sup>32</sup> And whoever says a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven
Nestor	אשר קלל את האב והבן ורוח הקדש . . . המקלל את הבן והתחרט האב יכפר לו who has cursed the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit . . . he who curses the Son and repents, the Father will make atonement for him
ben Reuben	<sup>30</sup> ומי שאינו מאסף עמי הוא מפזר <sup>32</sup> ומי שילעיג מהבן יכופר עליו <sup>30</sup> whoever does not gather with me scatters <sup>32</sup> And whoever mocks the Son will be forgiven for it
Joseph (ט)	החוטא באב ובבן יש לו מחילה He who sins against the Father and the Son has forgiveness
Joseph (מא)	החוטא באב יתכפר לו וכן החוטא בבן He who sins against the Father will be forgiven; so also he who sins against the Son
Ms Or Rome #53	מי שחטא נגד האב יש לו כפרה אם ישוב בתשובה . . . מי שחטא נגד הבן יש לו מחילה Whoever sins against the Father has forgiveness if he repents. . . . Whoever sins against the Son has forgiveness
Shem-Tob	<sup>30</sup> (מי) שלא יתחבר עמי יכפור (בי) <sup>32</sup> וכל האומר דבר נגד בן האדם ימחל לו <sup>30</sup> Whoever does not join with me denies me <sup>32</sup> And everyone who says a word against the Son of Man it will be forgiven him
Shem-Tob (Comment after 12:37)	הנה האב והבן ימחלו לו אבל הרוח לא ימחול לו Behold the Father and the Son will forgive him but the Spirit will not forgive him
du Tillet	<sup>30</sup> ומי שלא יאסוף עמי הוא יפזר <sup>32</sup> וכל איש שיאמר דבר על בן אדם יסלח לו <sup>30</sup> And whoever does not gather with me scatters <sup>32</sup> And every man who says a word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven him

Gospel | Whoever blasphemes against the Father will be forgiven, and  
of Thomas 44 | whoever blasphemes against the Son will be forgiven.<sup>32</sup>

Unfortunately, verse 30 is lacking in Nestor, Joseph, and Ms Or Rome #53. Nevertheless their reading of "Father" in verse 32, along with the text reflected in Shem-Tob's comment, shows a continuity running throughout this part of the Hebrew tradition. As stated before,<sup>33</sup> the reading reflected in Shem-Tob's comment is to be preferred to that in his biblical text since the latter apparently represents scribal revision toward the Greek and Latin. The antiquity of the reading "Father" is supported by its appearance in the Coptic Gospel of Thomas.

Another possible continuity in the Hebrew tradition is the unique reading in Shem-Tob of יכפור ("denies") and the root כפר meaning "to forgive" that appears in Nestor, ben Reuben, Joseph (מא) and Ms Or Rome #53. Allowing for scribal alteration in the transmission of the Hebrew tradition, it is conceivable that a word connection based on the root כפר stood in the original text. A possible reconstruction of the Hebrew is:

He who does not join me denies (יכפור) me . . .  
He who blasphemes the Father and the Son will be forgiven (יכפר).

A final continuity in the Hebrew tradition is the concept of 'repentance' mentioned in Nestor and Ms Or Rome #53.

Revision toward the Greek and Latin is found (1) in the absence of "repentance" in all documents other than Nestor and Ms Or Rome #53, (2) in the absence of "Father" in ben Reuben, Shem-Tob's revised text, and du Tillet, and (3) in the reading פזר ("scatters") in ben Reuben and du Tillet. Again du Tillet is closest of the Hebrew texts to the Greek and Latin and apparently represents the end result of a long evolutionary process.

<sup>32</sup>Translation by Thomas O. Lambdin in *The Nag Hammadi Library*, ed. James M. Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1977) 123.

<sup>33</sup>See on Matt 5:17-18a above and n. 30.

## MATT 13:57

Greek (= Vg)	οὐκ ἔστιν προφήτης ἄτιμος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πατρίδι καὶ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ A prophet is not without honor except in his homeland and in his own house.
Mark 6:4	οὐκ ἔστιν προφήτης ἄτιμος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τοῖς συγγενεῦσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ A prophet is not without honor except in his own homeland and among his own kin and in his own house.
Luke 4:24	οὐδεὶς προφήτης δεκτός ἐστιν ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ No prophet is acceptable in his own homeland.
Nestor	הנביא אינו מתקלל כי אם במדינתו No prophet is cursed except in his own city/land.
Nizzahon Vetus #167	אין נביא בלא כבוד אלא בעירו ובביתו No prophet is without honor except in his own city and in his own house.
Nizzahon Vetus #207	לא יהיה נביא מבוזה ולא יתחרף כי אם במדינתו ובקום שמכירו אותו A prophet is not held in contempt or abused save in his own city/land and in a place where he is recognized.
Shem-Tob	אין נביא שאין לו כבוד כ"א בארצו ועירו וביתו No prophet is without honor except in his own land and in his own city and in his own house.
du Tillet	אין נביא בלא כבוד אלא במקום מולדתו ובביתו No prophet is without honor except in the place of his homeland and in his own house.

The synoptic gospels reflect a variegated tradition in regard to the locality of a prophet's dishonor: (1) Luke says "homeland"; (2) Matthew, "homeland and house"; and (3) Mark, "homeland, kin, and house." There is some ambiguity in the word πατρίς which can mean "homeland" or "hometown." Usually, however, the reference is broader than "town" and is best understood as "homeland." A similar ambiguity exists in Nestor's במדינתו which can mean "in his land" or "in his city." This reading is preserved in Nizzahon Vetus #207 which, however, is only a rough paraphrase of our passage. Elsewhere the Nizzahon Vetus (#167) reads בעירו which clearly means "in his city." Shem-Tob reads בארצו ועירו, "in his land and in his city," a doublet apparently based on the ambiguity



of במדינתו. Du Tillet returns to the concept of "homeland," reading מולדתו. Thus we see an interconnection running throughout the Hebrew tradition oscillating between the ideas "homeland," "city," and combinations of them.

One may argue that the earliest form of the tradition was the ambiguous πατρίς ("homeland/hometown") or מדינה ("land/city") which eventually gave rise to the doublet בארצו ועירו in Shem-Tob. This may not be the case, however, in view of the parallel in the Gospel of Thomas 31 which reads, "No prophet is acceptable in his village; no physician works cures on those who know him." The reading of "acceptable" in Thomas corresponds to Luke. The reading of "village" corresponds to Nizzahon Vetus #167 and Shem-Tob. We cannot know the original (whether Greek or Syriac) that stands in the background of Thomas in order to judge the specificity of the word "village" (time). Thomas 32, however, reads, "Jesus said: A city (πόλις) that is built on a high mountain (and) fortified cannot fall nor can it remain hidden." A catchword connection appears to exist between the two sayings in Thomas based on the idea "village/city." The order of sayings in Thomas, then, suggests that a very early form of Matt. 13:57, perhaps the original, read "city" rather than "homeland." In view of this the following development in the tradition is suggested:

1. עיר stands as an original Hebrew base (Nizzahon Vetus #167).
2. עיר gave rise to the ambiguous synonym מדינה "city/land" (Nestor).
3. מדינה gave rise to Greek πατρίς "homeland/hometown" and in Hebrew to the doublet בארצו ועירו "in his land and his city" (Shem-Tob). Finally, it is clear that du Tillet of all the Hebrew texts is the closest to the Greek and Latin of Matthew and again appears to represent a revision.

These examples show that in some way the First Gospel in Shem-Tob fits into a process of textual evolution that began in primitive times and culminated in du Tillet in the sixteenth century, or possible later if our survey should include subsequent Hebrew texts of Matthew. The suggestion made here is that the gospel text incorporated into the *Even Bohan* was not a freshly made translation of the First Gospel by Shem-Tob, but was a reproduction, possibly with some revision by Shem-Tob himself, of an already existing literary Hebrew tradition that had been in the process of evolution for some time.

## The Evidence from Shem-Tob Himself

Two comments made by Shem-Tob himself further suggest that his Hebrew text of Matthew was not a freshly made translation but one that was already in existence. The first comment comes from his brief introduction to section twelve (in the British Library ms) of the *Even Bohan*.<sup>34</sup>

אמר המחבר שם טוב בן יצחק בן שפרוט ראיתי להשלים  
חבורי זה אשר (קראתי) אב"ן בוח"ן להעתיק ספרי  
האוונג'ייליון עם היותם שהספרים היות אסורים לנו  
לקרוא בהם פן יבואו התלמידים שלא שמשו כל צרכם וישתו  
מהמים ההם, עם כל זה ראיתי להעתיקם לשתי סיבות ה"א  
להשיב מתוכם לנוצרים ובפרט למומרים שמדברים בעניין  
אמונתם ואינם יודעים דבר אמונה ומפרשים פסוקי תורתנו  
הקדושה בעניין זה הפך האמת והפך אמונתם ובוזה יגיע שבה  
ליהודי לאותו המתווכח עמהם כאשר ילכדם בשוחתם

ח"ב להראות לבעלי אמונתם (הרמה) חסרון הספרים ההם  
והשיגאות הנפלות בתוכם ובוזה ידעו ויבינו יתרון  
ומעלת אמונתנו על שאר האמונות, לפי שלא יודע גודל מעלת  
הדבר כי אם בבחינת הפכו, ואני נשען בשית (באל ית') שלא  
יצא מזה רק טוב כמו שכוונתי לטובה, ואכתוב בכל פרק ופרק  
ההשגות אשר יראו לי בתוכן, והנני משביע לכל מעתיק בתי  
העולם לכל (יעתיק) ספרי האונג'ייליוס אם לא (יכתוב)  
בכל מקום ההשגות אשר כתבתי כפי אשר סדרתם וכתבתם הנה

The author, Shem-Tob ben-Isaac ben-Shaprut, says: I have chosen to complete this my treatise which (I have called) *Even Bohan* by transcribing (להעתיק) the books of the gospel in spite of the fact that the books are forbidden for us to read, lest the disciples should come without having sufficient practice and should drink from those waters. Nevertheless, I have chosen to transcribe them (להעתיקם) for two reasons: The first is to answer the Christians from them and especially proselytes who speak in regard to their faith but do not know the word of faith and explain the Scriptures of our holy law in regard to that which is contrary to the truth and contrary to their faith. In this way glory will come to the Jew who debates with them whenever he captures them in their own pit.

The second is to show to the faithful the degree of defect in these books and the errors that occur in them. By this they will know and understand the superiority and virtue of our faith to the other religions. Since the greatness of the virtue of the word is not known except by an examination

<sup>34</sup>The words in parentheses come from ms A; otherwise the text is from the British Library ms.

of that which is contrary to it, I depend on God, blessed be he, that there come from this nothing but good since I have aimed at that which is good. I have written section by section all the objections that appear to me to be in them. I adjure by God every copyist (מעתיק) that he not copy (יעתיק) the books of the gospel unless (he write) in every place the objections that I have written just as I have arranged them and written them here.

The root translated “transcribe” or “copy” above is עתק which can mean either “to transcribe/copy” or “to translate.”<sup>35</sup> In its first two occurrences modern scholars ordinarily have taken it to mean “to translate,” with the result that Shem-Tob is reputed to be the first rabbi to produce a complete translation of a gospel into Hebrew.<sup>36</sup>

Since the context is not completely clear, the following need to be considered. (1) Shem-Tob says he has chosen to complete the *Even Bohan* by transcribing/translating the books of the gospel. If he meant to “transcribe” rather than to “translate,” this might presuppose the existence of more than one gospel in Hebrew by the fourteenth century (although as a matter of fact Shem-Tob reproduced Matthew only). Epiphanius in the fourth century speaks of a Hebrew translation of John and Acts as well as the original Hebrew Matthew.<sup>37</sup> From the gospel quotations from the *Pugio Fidei* by Raymund Martini, written about 1278 and based on Hebrew manuscripts confiscated earlier from the Jews in Aragon, Alexander Marx concludes: “we learn that a Hebrew translation of the Gospels already existed in thirteenth-century Spain.”<sup>38</sup> The existence of Hebrew gospels in the fourteenth century is thus a probability. On the other hand, it is possible that ספרי האורנגיילין refers to the various sections of Matthew, rather than to the four canonical gospels. In this case Shem-Tob had only the Gospel of Matthew in mind.

(2) In the last paragraph of Shem-Tob’s introduction the root עתק appears twice more but here it seems to require the meaning of “copy” with no ambiguity at all. He writes: “I adjure by God every copyist (מעתיק)

<sup>35</sup>Kutscher pointed out that Maimonides used the word to mean “transmit,” an Arabism. See E. Y. Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language* (Leiden: Brill, 1982) 165.

<sup>36</sup>Lapide, *Hebrew in the Church*, 46. Cf. Black *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 295; Lindsey, *A Hebrew Translation of the Gospel of Mark*, 67.

<sup>37</sup>*Panarion* 30.3.6.

<sup>38</sup>Marx, “The Polemical Manuscripts in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America,” 271. See also Rosenthal, *תרגום של הבשורה על-פי מתי ליעקב בן ראובן*, 49.

that he not copy (יעתיק) the books of the gospel unless” he include the objections as well. That Shem-Tob envisioned his work to be “translated” into other languages is hardly likely. He wrote in Hebrew in the first place in order to prepare the Jewish people to defend their faith against Christian antagonists. The root עתק can hardly be understood in this context other than with reference to Jews who may copy Shem-Tob’s work. But lest he be hopelessly confusing, Shem-Tob must also use עתק in the beginning of his introduction to mean “copy.”<sup>39</sup>

The preponderant weight of evidence, therefore, suggests that Shem-Tob only copied, not translated, his Matthew and that his Matthew was already in Hebrew when he got it.

The second comment by Shem-Tob that suggests his Hebrew text of Matthew was not a freshly made translation comes in a section after Matt 21:9. He writes:

הנה יוחנן פרק כ"ח כתב שישו עצמו לקח האתון שאמר הכתוב  
אל תראי בת ציון הנה מלכך יבא לך יושב על עיר בן אתונות  
גיואן (ומטיב) שנו הכתוב ולא הסכימו בשנוי כי הכתוב  
אומר עני ורוכב על חמור ועל עיר בן אתונות

Here John perek 28 wrote that Jesus himself took the ass (האתון) because that which is written says: do not fear, daughter of Zion, behold, your king comes to you sitting upon a colt (עיר) the foal of asses (אתונות). John (and) Matthew have changed the Scripture and do not agree in the change because the Scripture says: humble and riding upon an ass (חמור) and upon the colt (עיר) the foal of asses.

Shem-Tob’s objection to John and Matthew is not totally clear. It is clear, however, that he accuses them of reading אתון instead of the Masoretic Text of Zech 9:9 which reads חמור.<sup>40</sup> But since he criticizes the gospel reading at this point, the reading must not have been made by Shem-Tob. The conclusion is inescapable: this section of Matthew was not translated into Hebrew by Shem-Tob.

<sup>39</sup>It is interesting to note that Lapide is inconsistent in translating the root עתק. For the initial מעתיק he renders “Übersetzung” (“translation”), but for the following להעתיק he renders “Abschreiber” (“copyist”) and “zu kopieren” (“to copy”) respectively. See Pinchas E. Lapide, “Der ‘Prüfstein’ aus Spanien,” *Sefarad* 34 (1974): 231-32.

<sup>40</sup>Since both אתון and חמור are legitimate Hebrew correspondents for the Greek ὄνον (f. m.), his objection to אתון is not that it mistranslates the Greek; his objection is that it varies from the Hebrew of the Masoretic Text.

From the above we may draw the following conclusions:

1. The text of the Hebrew Matthew in Shem-Tob is not the same as the Hebrew Matthean texts in du Tillet and Münster. There are, however, textual links between them that suggest the latter two evolved from a text base that was similar to Shem-Tob.
2. The text of Shem-Tob is not a freshly made translation by Shem-Tob. When compared to Hebrew and Aramaic quotations of Matthew from earlier Jewish and anti-Christian writings, it appears to have been based on a primitive Hebrew literary tradition. Comments by Shem-Tob himself further suggest that he made use of an already existing Hebrew Matthew.
3. The evidence as a whole presupposes a Hebrew text of Matthew that existed from ancient times and was used among the Jews for polemical purposes against Christians. Through centuries of use this text went through a process of evolution which included stylistic modification and changes designed to bring the text into closer harmony with the canonical text used by Christians. The latter changes were presumably for the purpose of facilitating discussion and debate.

## Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew: A Literary and Textual Profile

In this section<sup>1</sup> a literary and textual profile of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew will be presented in order to clarify, as much as possible, its relationship to the Greek Matthew. Three basic possibilities for this relationship exist: 1. The Hebrew text is a translation of the Greek (or one of its versions such as the Latin). 2. The Greek is a translation of the Hebrew. 3. Both the Hebrew and the Greek represent original compositions in their own respective languages with one serving as a literary model for the other. The discussion will conclude that number 3 is to be preferred without, however, determining which—the Greek or the Hebrew—served as a model for the other. In addition the discussion will make it clear that the Hebrew

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<sup>1</sup>The article by Pinchas E. Lapide ("Der 'Prüfstein' aus Spanien," *Sefarad* 34 (1974): 227-72) should be consulted at this point. It is a detailed analysis of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. Of particular importance is the discussion (on pp. 246-49) of "Romanismen" which reflect late revisions. Unfortunately Lapide believes the Hebrew Matthew is a translation of the Latin Vulgate, perhaps partly because he used the Neofiti ms which shows considerable assimilation to the Vulgate in places where other mss do not. (See for examples 2:1 Magi, Neofiti מאגוס, Brit Lib ms BCDEFGH void [all reading simply חוים בכוכבים]; 3:9 filios Abrahæ, Neofiti בנים לאברהם, Brit Lib ms ABCDEFG בנו אברהם; 4:21 Zebedæus, Neofiti זבדיאוש, D זבדאדא, BC זבדאדא, EF זבאדא; 6:28 lilia agri, Neofiti גילין, Brit Lib ms גילון, BC גילין, DG גילין; 15:2 traditionem seniorum, Neofiti תקנות הראשונים, AH תקנות הראשונים; 16:18 tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo, Neofiti אתה אבן ועל זאת האבן אבנה, Brit Lib ms CDEFG על טיבך ואני אבנה עליך; 24:47 super omnia bona sua, Neofiti שעל טפיו.) Lapide himself notes many differences in Shem-Tob and the Vulgate without, however, recognizing the true nature of the oldest layer of the Hebrew text. Other problems with the article are: (1) It fails to note Shem-Tob's relationship to the Old Syriac and the Diatessaron against the Latin tradition, and to the Old Latin against the Vulgate (see below). (2) It shows no recognition of Shem-Tob's relationship to the Coptic Gospel of Thomas. (3) It fails to note most of the puns, word connections, and alliterations that are so characteristic of Shem-Tob's Matthew. (4) It lacks a discussion of the abbreviation/circumlocution for the divine name. (5) Finally, a general misunderstanding of the nature of Shem-Tob's Matthew, even in specific contexts (e.g., 12:28—see below), characterizes the article. Nevertheless, in spite of these difficulties, Lapide's study can be read with profit.

text of our manuscripts has been corrupted by a series of revisions and modifications designed to present the Hebrew in a more grammatically acceptable form and to make it conform more closely to the Greek and Latin texts of Matthew. It will be argued that despite the revisions and modifications by medieval scribes, an old substratum to the Matthean text reflects Hebrew composition, not translation.

The discussion will include: (1) linguistic characteristics of the Hebrew text; (2) late revisions to the Hebrew text; (3) textual relationships of Shem-Tob's Matthew; (4) puns, word connections, and alliteration; (5) the Divine Name; (6) theological tendencies in Shem-Tob's Matthew; (7) different interpretations in Shem-Tob's Matthew; (8) passages suggesting a variant Hebrew substratum for the Greek; (9) Shem-Tob's text and synoptic variation; and (10) other interesting readings in Shem-Tob's Matthew.

### Linguistic Characteristics of the Hebrew Text

It is difficult to assess the language of the text of Matthew in Shem-Tob since it is a Christian writing preserved in a Jewish polemical treatise. The question is, would a Jewish polemist of the fourteenth century translate a Christian document from Greek or Latin and render it into standard biblical Hebrew (BH) with a mixture of Mishnaic Hebrew (MH) and even late medieval vocabulary. If it were a matter of an original Jewish composition in the late Middle Ages one would expect BH or even archaic BH to play a dominant role, as is the case with most texts written during this time.<sup>2</sup>

But the fact is what we have is a Christian text in Hebrew appearing in a Jewish polemical treatise designed specifically to point out its errors and the general fallacious nature of Christianity. Yet the linguistic nature of the gospel text is basically BH with a healthy mixture of MH and later rabbinic vocabulary and idiom.

In many ways the linguistic situation of Shem-Tob's Matthew is analogous to the Masada fragments of Ben Sira<sup>3</sup> when compared to the late fragments of the same document from the Cairo Geniza.<sup>4</sup> Kutscher ex-

<sup>2</sup>See Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, 88.

<sup>3</sup>See Y. Yadin, *The Ben Sira Scroll from Masada* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1965).

<sup>4</sup>These were published in Israel Lévi, *The Hebrew Text of the Book of Ecclesiasticus* (Leiden: Brill, 1904). See also A. A. di Lella, *The Hebrew Text of Sirach* (The Hague, 1966).

plains the original Ben Sira as written primarily in BH without escaping, however, the influence of MH, an occasional parallel to the Dead Sea Scrolls, and contemporary Aramaic. The medieval fragments from the Cairo Geniza, in addition to this, show numerous changes due to the corrections of medieval scribes designed to bring the text into a more contemporary form in regard to spelling, vocabulary, and other linguistic phenomena.<sup>5</sup>

The Hebrew Matthew of Shem-Tob is similar. We already have demonstrated that the basic text predates the fourteenth century, in some instances going back to very early times. Our evidence for this is its connection with quotations of Matthew in early Jewish polemical treatises and in one case in the Talmud. Assuming that the basic text of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is a primitive Hebrew text, we have in this case what one might expect, a writing composed primarily in BH with a mixture of MH elements, but which has undergone scribal modification designed to bring it more into harmony with later linguistic forms. In addition, the text reflects considerable revision designed to make it conform more closely to the standard Greek and Latin texts of the Gospel during the Middle Ages.

This means that Shem-Tob's Matthew, as printed above, does not preserve the original Hebrew in a pure form. It has been contaminated by Jewish scribes during the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, enough of the original text is left intact to observe its primitive nature. It is clear to see that its base is biblical and Mishnaic Hebrew and that it is written in unpolished style. It is filled with ungrammatical constructions and Aramaized forms and idioms. Some of these points will be demonstrated in the following discussion.

### The Verb

The most pronounced difference in BH and MH is the virtual disappearance of the consecutive tenses in MH.<sup>6</sup> The earliest possible date assignable to Shem-Tob's Matthean text is the first century CE, a time when BH had ceased to be spoken and MH had become dominant. In accordance

<sup>5</sup>Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, 87-93. See also the cautious remarks of Isaac Rabinowitz, "The Qumran Hebrew Original of Ben Sira's Concluding Acrostic on Wisdom," *HUCA* 42 (1971): 173-74.

<sup>6</sup>M. H. Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927, 1958) 72. Cf. E. Y. Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll (1 QIsa)* (Leiden: Brill, 1974) 41-42.

with this, Shem-Tob's text appears to be an imitation of BH in regard to tense. The consecutive tense system, for example, dominates the language throughout. The following are typical cases.

- 1:24 ויקץ יוסף . . . ויעש  
 2:4 ויקבוץ כל גדוליו ויבקש  
 3:15 ויען ישו ויאמר  
 4:18 וילך ישו . . . וירא  
 8:16 ויהי לעת הערב ויבאו  
 14:12 ויבאו תלמידי יוחנן וישאו  
 19:5 יעזוב איש . . . ודבק באשתו  
 20:24 וישמעו העשרה ויחר בעיניהם

Although BH is clearly being written, lapses in the consecutive tenses show that the writer and/or later scribes of Shem-Tob's Matthew were not completely at ease with this usage. Occasional examples exist of nonconsecutive tenses where the *waw* is merely a connective:

- 1:21 ותלד בן ותקרא שמו ישוע  
 14:35 שלחו בכל אותו המלכות והביאו לו  
 15:36 ולקח השבעה ככרות וישברם ונתנם  
 15:39 נכנס ישו בספינה ובא לארץ  
 24:7 ויקום גוי על גוי . . . ויהיו מהומות רבות  
 25:17 הלך קנה ומכר והרויח חמשה אחרים

Another difference between BH and MH occurs in the use of the infinitive with the prepositions כ and ב. The construction appears in BH while MH uses כש with the finite verb as כאשר in BH.<sup>7</sup> All forms appear in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew: (1) infinitive plus preposition: 1:20 ובחשבו 6:6, 14:30, 15:29, 17:14; (2) כש- 14:14, 14:19, 14:39, 15:29, 17:14; (3) כאשר 2:10, 5:48, 14:26, 14:30, 15:29, 17:14, 20:24, 23:23, 24:12, 24:14, 24:16, 24:18, 24:20, 24:22, 24:24, 24:26, 24:28, 24:30, 24:32, 24:34, 24:36, 24:38, 24:40, 24:42, 24:44, 24:46, 24:48, 24:50, 24:52, 24:54, 24:56, 24:58, 24:60, 24:62, 24:64, 24:66, 24:68, 24:70, 24:72, 24:74, 24:76, 24:78, 24:80, 24:82, 24:84, 24:86, 24:88, 24:90, 24:92, 24:94, 24:96, 24:98, 24:100, 24:102, 24:104, 24:106, 24:108, 24:110, 24:112, 24:114, 24:116, 24:118, 24:120, 24:122, 24:124, 24:126, 24:128, 24:130, 24:132, 24:134, 24:136, 24:138, 24:140, 24:142, 24:144, 24:146, 24:148, 24:150, 24:152, 24:154, 24:156, 24:158, 24:160, 24:162, 24:164, 24:166, 24:168, 24:170, 24:172, 24:174, 24:176, 24:178, 24:180, 24:182, 24:184, 24:186, 24:188, 24:190, 24:192, 24:194, 24:196, 24:198, 24:200, 24:202, 24:204, 24:206, 24:208, 24:210, 24:212, 24:214, 24:216, 24:218, 24:220, 24:222, 24:224, 24:226, 24:228, 24:230, 24:232, 24:234, 24:236, 24:238, 24:240, 24:242, 24:244, 24:246, 24:248, 24:250, 24:252, 24:254, 24:256, 24:258, 24:260, 24:262, 24:264, 24:266, 24:268, 24:270, 24:272, 24:274, 24:276, 24:278, 24:280, 24:282, 24:284, 24:286, 24:288, 24:290, 24:292, 24:294, 24:296, 24:298, 24:300, 24:302, 24:304, 24:306, 24:308, 24:310, 24:312, 24:314, 24:316, 24:318, 24:320, 24:322, 24:324, 24:326, 24:328, 24:330, 24:332, 24:334, 24:336, 24:338, 24:340, 24:342, 24:344, 24:346, 24:348, 24:350, 24:352, 24:354, 24:356, 24:358, 24:360, 24:362, 24:364, 24:366, 24:368, 24:370, 24:372, 24:374, 24:376, 24:378, 24:380, 24:382, 24:384, 24:386, 24:388, 24:390, 24:392, 24:394, 24:396, 24:398, 24:400, 24:402, 24:404, 24:406, 24:408, 24:410, 24:412, 24:414, 24:416, 24:418, 24:420, 24:422, 24:424, 24:426, 24:428, 24:430, 24:432, 24:434, 24:436, 24:438, 24:440, 24:442, 24:444, 24:446, 24:448, 24:450, 24:452, 24:454, 24:456, 24:458, 24:460, 24:462, 24:464, 24:466, 24:468, 24:470, 24:472, 24:474, 24:476, 24:478, 24:480, 24:482, 24:484, 24:486, 24:488, 24:490, 24:492, 24:494, 24:496, 24:498, 24:500, 24:502, 24:504, 24:506, 24:508, 24:510, 24:512, 24:514, 24:516, 24:518, 24:520, 24:522, 24:524, 24:526, 24:528, 24:530, 24:532, 24:534, 24:536, 24:538, 24:540, 24:542, 24:544, 24:546, 24:548, 24:550, 24:552, 24:554, 24:556, 24:558, 24:560, 24:562, 24:564, 24:566, 24:568, 24:570, 24:572, 24:574, 24:576, 24:578, 24:580, 24:582, 24:584, 24:586, 24:588, 24:590, 24:592, 24:594, 24:596, 24:598, 24:600, 24:602, 24:604, 24:606, 24:608, 24:610, 24:612, 24:614, 24:616, 24:618, 24:620, 24:622, 24:624, 24:626, 24:628, 24:630, 24:632, 24:634, 24:636, 24:638, 24:640, 24:642, 24:644, 24:646, 24:648, 24:650, 24:652, 24:654, 24:656, 24:658, 24:660, 24:662, 24:664, 24:666, 24:668, 24:670, 24:672, 24:674, 24:676, 24:678, 24:680, 24:682, 24:684, 24:686, 24:688, 24:690, 24:692, 24:694, 24:696, 24:698, 24:700, 24:702, 24:704, 24:706, 24:708, 24:710, 24:712, 24:714, 24:716, 24:718, 24:720, 24:722, 24:724, 24:726, 24:728, 24:730, 24:732, 24:734, 24:736, 24:738, 24:740, 24:742, 24:744, 24:746, 24:748, 24:750, 24:752, 24:754, 24:756, 24:758, 24:760, 24:762, 24:764, 24:766, 24:768, 24:770, 24:772, 24:774, 24:776, 24:778, 24:780, 24:782, 24:784, 24:786, 24:788, 24:790, 24:792, 24:794, 24:796, 24:798, 24:800, 24:802, 24:804, 24:806, 24:808, 24:810, 24:812, 24:814, 24:816, 24:818, 24:820, 24:822, 24:824, 24:826, 24:828, 24:830, 24:832, 24:834, 24:836, 24:838, 24:840, 24:842, 24:844, 24:846, 24:848, 24:850, 24:852, 24:854, 24:856, 24:858, 24:860, 24:862, 24:864, 24:866, 24:868, 24:870, 24:872, 24:874, 24:876, 24:878, 24:880, 24:882, 24:884, 24:886, 24:888, 24:890, 24:892, 24:894, 24:896, 24:898, 24:900, 24:902, 24:904, 24:906, 24:908, 24:910, 24:912, 24:914, 24:916, 24:918, 24:920, 24:922, 24:924, 24:926, 24:928, 24:930, 24:932, 24:934, 24:936, 24:938, 24:940, 24:942, 24:944, 24:946, 24:948, 24:950, 24:952, 24:954, 24:956, 24:958, 24:960, 24:962, 24:964, 24:966, 24:968, 24:970, 24:972, 24:974, 24:976, 24:978, 24:980, 24:982, 24:984, 24:986, 24:988, 24:990, 24:992, 24:994, 24:996, 24:998, 24:1000.

The infinitive absolute is not used at all in MH<sup>8</sup> and may appear once in Shem-Tob, at 22:24 (although the form is possibly an imperative here).

An interesting form of the infinitive construct plus לא, used for prohibition, appears at 23:23, ולא לשכוח אותם. It occurs in late BH and the Dead Sea Scrolls but rarely if ever in standard BH. Kutscher says it "is all the more interesting since it crops up in the languages spoken in Jerusalem

<sup>7</sup>Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, 165.

<sup>8</sup>Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll*, 41.

at the time, as we see from Aramaic and Greek inscriptions of Jerusalem (and also in Punic, that is, late Canaanite of North Africa)."<sup>9</sup>

### Pronouns

In the first person singular אני is dominant in MH while both אני and אנכי are found in BH.<sup>10</sup> The form אני is dominant in Shem-Tob with אנכי occurring in 18:20. In regard to the plural, MH always uses אנו while BH uses אנחנו except for the k<sup>t</sup>ib at Jer 42:6.<sup>11</sup> The short form is used in Shem-Tob, although אנחנו appears occasionally (see 6:12). Of the two forms הם and המה, the latter is found only in biblical quotations in MH.<sup>12</sup> Both occur in Shem-Tob: (1) המה: 2:13, 5:8, 11:7; (2) הם: 13:13, 38, 39, 23:23.

The plural demonstrative pronoun אלה, standard for BH, becomes אלו in MH. Both forms occur in Shem-Tob: (1) אלה: 10:2, 5, 15:20, 24:8; (2) אלו: 7:24, 28, 23:23.

The possessive is regularly expressed in MH by the combination of ש plus the preposition ל. Although in older texts it is attached to the noun it governs, it eventually came to exist as a separate particle, של.<sup>13</sup> Though rare, של occurs in Shem-Tob at 10:20, 12:39, 26:17, and 27:15. (Cf. שלכם at 12:27, שליך at 25:25, שלי at 25:27, and שלקץ at 27:63.)

### Vocabulary

The vocabulary in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew<sup>14</sup> comes from various levels of the history of the language including BH, MH, and later rabbinic Hebrew. (1) Typical words occurring in BH and Shem-Tob but not in MH are: אולי 11:23, 27:64; אז 9:1, 6, 14, 37, 10:1, 11:20, 12:13, 14, 22, 44, 45, 13:36, 43; רק 9:6, 10:28, 11:30; אמנם 25:21, 26:56; אכן 8:17, 10:22; בעד 2:8, 5:11, 6:2, 6, 10:18, 11:10; למען 5:45; פן 6:1, 8:4, 25, 9:16, 30, 13:15, 29; אשר 8:27, 9:36, 10:4, 11:4, 12:18; כי 9:2, 13, 11:18, 26, 12:41; גם 8:29. (2) Typical words occurring in MH and Shem-Tob but not in BH are: מיד 21:41; כתיב 22:44; מוכן 22:8, 25:33; רבן 23:7; זהוב 18:24; מִתֵּר 12:10, 19:3; מעוט 14:31, 17:20; כריתה 19:7; זון 13:25; חרדל

<sup>9</sup>Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, 99.

<sup>10</sup>Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, 39.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 39-40.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 40.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 43-44.

<sup>14</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, 46-57.



27:21	Greek Shem-Tob aur f	ὁ ἡγεμών (the governor) פִּילָטוֹס (Pilate) Pilatus (Pilate)
Shem-Tob = OS ≠ Sy <sup>p16</sup>		
3:9	Greek Shem-Tob Sy <sup>s.c</sup>	καὶ μὴ δόξῃτε λέγειν (and do not think to say) וְאֵל תֹּאמְרוּ (and do not say) וְלֹא תֹאמְרוּ (and do not say)
4:18	Greek Shem-Tob Sy <sup>s</sup>	παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν (by the sea) עַל שְׂפַת הַיָּם (by the shore of the sea) עַל גִּנֵּב סִפְתָּה דִּימָא (by the shore of the sea)
5:12	Greek Shem-Tob Sy <sup>s</sup>	τοὺς προφῆτας τοὺς πρὸ ὑμῶν (the prophets who were before you) הַנְּבִיאִים (the prophets) לְנְבִיא (the prophets)
12:45	Greek Shem-Tob Sy <sup>s</sup>	ἑπτὰ ἕτερα πνεύματα (seven other spirits) שִׁבְעָה רוּחוֹת (seven spirits) שִׁבְעָה רוּחָא (seven spirits)
16:17	Greek Shem-Tob Sy <sup>c</sup>	ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ (Jesus answered and said to him) וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו יֵשׁוּ (Jesus said to him) אָמַר לֵה יֵשׁוּעַ (Jesus said to him)
20:14	Greek Shem-Tob Sy <sup>s</sup> Sy <sup>c</sup>	θέλω (I wish) אִם אֲנִי רוּצָה (If I wish) אִן צָבִיא (If I wish) וְאִן צָבָא אָנָּא (And if I wish)

Shem-Tob = the Diatessaron of Tatian

There are a number of readings in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew that correspond to Tatian's Diatessaron. As is well known, Tatian, a native of Assyria, came to Rome in the middle of the second century and became a disciple of Justin Martyr. About 172 he left Rome for the Euphrates Valley and is said to have founded the sect of Encratites. He died a few years later. Sometime either shortly before leaving Rome or after returning to Mesopotamia, he constructed a harmony of the gospels in which the texts

<sup>16</sup>For Sy<sup>s.c</sup> the following have been used: Agnes Smith Lewis, *The Old Syriac Gospels or Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe* (London, 1910); F. C. Burkitt, *Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe*, vol. 1: *Text* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1904).

of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were woven together into a continuous narrative. This was called the Diatessaron of Tatian.

It is notoriously difficult to identify true Diatessaric readings due to the fact that no copy of the original has ever been discovered.<sup>17</sup> The surest witness to its text is Ephraem's commentary on the Diatessaron (EC). About three-fifths of the original Syriac of this work was published in 1963 by Dom Louis Leloir.<sup>18</sup> An Armenian version of this same work also exists (vEC) and will be cited where necessary below.<sup>19</sup> Other witnesses to the text of the Diatessaron are problematic since they suffer from defects which impair their value for reconstructing the original text of the Diatessaron.<sup>20</sup> In the matter of sequence, however, as opposed to the actual wording of

<sup>17</sup>The original language of the Diatessaron has been the subject of endless debate. If Tatian made his composition after his departure from Rome (ca. 172) he probably made it in Syriac, although Kraeling argues that it was composed in Greek even if it was written in Mesopotamia. See Carl H. Kraeling, *A Greek Fragment of Tatian's Diatessaron from Dura* (London, 1935) 15-18. If Tatian wrote it while he was in Rome he could have made it in Greek, Syriac, or Latin. For the latter see F. C. Burkitt, "The Dura Fragment of Tatian," *JTS* 36 (1935): 257-58. Many hold that it was written in Greek and was soon translated into Syriac. Among others see Adolf von Harnack, "Tatian's Diatessaron and Marcion's Commentar zum Evangelium bei Ephraem Syrus," *ZKG* 4 (1881): 494-95; *Chronologie der altchristlichen Literatur* (Leipzig, 1897) 1.289; H. J. Vogels, *Die Harmonistik von Evangelientext des Codex Cantabrigiensis*, TU 36 (Leipzig, 1910): 45-46; M.-J. Lagrange, "L'ancienne version Syriaque des Évangiles," *RB* 29 (1920): 326; Adolf Jülicher, "Der echte Tatiantext," *JBL* 43 (1924): 166. Others think the evidence points to a Syriac original. Notable among these are A. Baumstark, "Das griechische Diatessaronfragment von Dura Europos," *OrChr* 32 (1935): 250; Arthur Vööbus, *Studies in the History of the Gospel Text in Syriac* (Louvain, 1951) 12; G. A. Weir, "Tatian's Diatessaron and the Old Syriac Gospels. The Evidence of MS Chester Beatty 709" (Ph.D. diss., University of Edinburgh, 1969) xiv-xv.

<sup>18</sup>Louis Leloir, *Saint Ephrem, Commentaire de l'Évangile Concordant, Texte Syriaque (Manuscript Chester Beatty 709)* (Dublin, 1963).

<sup>19</sup>Louis Leloir, *Saint Ephrem, Commentaire de l'Évangile Concordant, Version Arménienne*, CSCO 137, *Scriptores Armeniaci* 1 (Louvain, 1953); Latin trans. 145, *Scriptores Armeniaci* 2 (Louvain, 1964). An English translation is by J. Hamlyn Hill, *A Dissertation on the Gospel Commentary of S. Ephraem the Syrian* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1896).

<sup>20</sup>See esp. ch. 3 in Vööbus, *Studies in the History of the Gospel Text in Syriac*, 25-45. The great collection of quotations of early Syriac fathers and the attempted reconstruction of the Diatessaron by Urbina must be viewed with caution since it uses early Syriac sources without sufficient discrimination. Ignatius Ortiz de Urbina, *Vetus Evangelium Syrorum, et exinde excerptum Diatessaron Tatiani*, *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia*, Series 6 (Madrid, 1967). Cf. the critical review of this work by Robert Murray, "Reconstructing the Diatessaron," *HeyJ* 10 (1969): 43-49.

the text, the Arabic Diatessaron is generally considered reliable<sup>21</sup> as well as when it agrees with the Syriac tradition against the canonical Greek. In several examples below where these criteria are met an English translation of the Arabic will be cited as a witness.<sup>22</sup>

The first two examples will consist of Tatianic readings (that is, readings involving the actual wording of the Diatessaron) in the Hebrew text of Shem-Tob.

5:14	Greek	οὐ δύναται πόλις κρυβῆναι ἐπάνω ὄρους κειμένη (A city <i>set</i> on a hill cannot be hidden.)
	Shem-Tob	עיר בנויה על ההר לא תוכל להסתתר (A city <i>built</i> on a hill cannot be hidden.)

Evidence for “built” being a Diatessaric reading is: (1) Sy<sup>s.c.p</sup> read “built” (בניא). (2) The Coptic Gospel of Thomas (32), which often shares readings with Tatian’s Diatessaron,<sup>23</sup> reads “A city being *built* on a high mountain and fortified cannot fall, nor can it be hidden.”<sup>24</sup> A Greek counterpart to this is Pap. *Oxyrhynch.* 1.7: πόλις οἰκοδομημένη ἐπ’ ἄκρον [ὁ] ὑψηλοῦς καὶ ἐστηριγμένη οὔτε πε[σ]εῖν δύναται οὐδὲ κρυβ[ε]ῖν. (3) Arabic Diatessaron 8.41: “It is impossible that a city *built* on a mountain should be hid.”

5:30	Greek	ἡ δεξιὰ σου χεὶρ	(your right hand)
	Shem-Tob	ידך	(your hand)
	vEC <sup>25</sup>		(your hand)

In addition to these readings there are several lengthy passages involving order and mixture of synoptic parallels rather than wording that correspond to the Diatessaron. The following is a sampling.

<sup>21</sup>See Bruce M. Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977) 10-36.

<sup>22</sup>The translation is that of Hope W. Hogg, “The Diatessaron of Tatian” in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 10, 5th ed., ed. Allan Menzies (reprint: Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1965) 35-138.

<sup>23</sup>T. Baarda, *Early Transmission of the Words of Jesus: Thomas, Tatian, and the Text of the New Testament*, ed. J. Helderman and S. J. Noorda (Amsterdam: VU Boekhandel/ Uitgeverij, 1983) 38. For a discussion of the relationship between the two and further bibliography see Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament*, 29-30.

<sup>24</sup>Translation by Lambdin in *The Nag Hammadi Library*, 122.

<sup>25</sup>See Hill, *Gospel Commentary of S. Ephraem*, 84n5.

### Shem-Tob

(Matt 12:1) and his disciples  
being hungry began to pluck  
the ears  
(Luke 6:1) and to crush them  
between their hands  
(Matt 12:1) and to eat them

### Arabic Diatessaron 7.37-38

his disciples  
hungered. And they were  
rubbing the ears

with their hands,  
and eating

### vEC

began to pluck the ears,  
to rub and to eat

The Diatessaron at this point appears to have been a combination of Matthean and Lukan readings. The major differences in the two synoptics are: (1) Matthew reads “hungered” (ἐπείνασαν) and “began” (ἤρξαντο). Neither of these elements appears in the majority text of Luke. (2) Luke reads “to crush them between their hands.” These words are lacking in the majority text of Matthew. A comparison of the Arabic Diatessaron<sup>26</sup> and Ephraem’s Armenian commentary on the Diatessaron demonstrates that at least parts of these three elements occurred in Tatian’s harmony. The reading in Shem-Tob concurs with Tatian since it too includes all three elements.

### Shem-Tob (Ms A)

(Matt 5:3) Blessed are the  
humble of spirit for theirs  
is the kingdom of heaven.  
(Matt 5:5) Blessed are the  
meek for they shall inherit  
the earth.  
(Matt 5:4) Blessed are  
those who wait for they  
shall be comforted.

### Sy<sup>c</sup>

(Matt 5:3) Happy is it for the  
poor in their spirit, that theirs  
is the kingdom of heaven.  
(Matt 5:5) Happy is it for the  
lowly, that they shall inherit  
the earth.  
(Matt 5:4) Happy is it for the  
mourners, that they shall be  
comforted. (Burkitt translation)

In this particular instance Sy<sup>c</sup>, accompanied by Shem-Tob, appears to follow the order of the Diatessaron of 5:3, 5:5, and 5:4. Hill argues that Ephraem and Aphraates did the same: “Ephraem quotes this beatitude [5:5—GH] before the preceding one, as if his Diatessaron had it in the or-

<sup>26</sup>The Arabic has not been revised toward the Peshitta in this instance. The latter reads according to the majority Greek text of Matthew.



der of the Curetonian Syriac and Aphraates.<sup>27</sup> The Arabic Diatessaron follows the Greek order and probably represents an accommodation to it.

### Shem-Tob

(Matt 3:10) Already the axe has reached the root of the tree; the one which does not produce good fruit will be cut down and burned in the fire  
(Luke 3:10-15) The crowds asked him:  
if so what shall we do.  
John answered them: he who has two shirts let him give one to him who has none.

So they came to be baptized.  
Many asked him:  
what shall we do,  
and he answered them:  
be anxious for no man.

and do not chastise them and be pleased with your lot.  
And all the people were thinking and reckoning in their circumcised heart,  
John is Jesus.  
(Luke 3:16) John answered all of them: (Matt 3:11) behold I truly baptize you in the days of repentance, but afterwards another comes mightier than I  
(Luke 3:16) the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to unfasten

### Arabic Diatessaron 4.18-25

Behold, the axe hath been laid at the roots of the trees, and so every tree that beareth not good fruit shall be taken and cast into the fire.  
And the multitudes were asking him and saying, What shall we do?  
He answered and said unto them, He that hath two tunics shall give to him that hath not; and he that hath food shall do likewise.  
And the publicans also came to be baptized,  
and they said unto him, Teacher, what shall we do?  
He said unto them, Seek no more than what ye are commanded to seek. And the servants of the guard asked him and said, And we also, what shall we do? He said unto them, Do not violence to any man, nor wrong him; and let your allowances satisfy you. And when the people were conjecturing about John, and all of them thinking in their hearts whether he were haply the Messiah, John answered and said unto them,

I baptize you with water  
  
there cometh one after me who is stronger than I the latches of whose shoes I am not worthy to loosen;

(Matt 3:11 || Luke 3:16) He will baptize you with the fire of the Holy Spirit.

he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

### Shem-Tob

(Matt 8:29) They cried out to him saying: what is between you and us, Jesus Son of God. Have you come before the time to grieve us and to destroy us?  
(Mark 5:8 || Luke 8:29) Then Jesus said to them: come out from there evil host. . . .  
(Matt 8:31) So the demons entreated him: since we have to go out from here, grant us authority to go into these swine.  
(Matt 8:32a) Then he said to them: go,  
(Luke 8:33) and the demons went out from the men and entered the swine  
(Matt 8:33b) and all the herd went in sudden haste, slipped off into the sea

and died in the water.

### Arabic Diatessaron 11.44-50

and cried out with a loud voice and said, What have we to do with thee, Jesus Son of the most high God. I adjure thee by God torment me not.  
And Jesus commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. . . . and those devils besought him to give them leave to enter the swine; and he gave them leave.  
And the devils went out of the man and entered into the swine.  
And that herd hastened to the summit and fell down into the midst of the sea, about two thousand, and they were choked in the water.

Two other very lengthy examples will be lumped together here without reproducing their texts. The first is the account of the transfiguration in Matt 17:1-5. Both in Shem-Tob and the Arabic Diatessaron (24.2-12) the account is a mixture of Matthew and Luke 9:28-35. The overlaps between Tatian's harmony and the text of Shem-Tob are striking. The second is Matt 17:17 and 19 between which is sandwiched Mark 9:20-28. This is also the case for the Arabic Diatessaron (24.35-46).

The relationship between Shem-Tob and Tatian is not entirely clear. Although it is similar to that between the Old Syriac and the Diatessaron, and between the Old Latin and the Diatessaron, it differs sometimes from them by containing very lengthy insertions from parallel accounts in agreement with Tatian. The relationship of Shem-Tob to Tatian goes beyond the numerous short Tatianic readings in the Syriac and Latin. In some passages it appears to be an actual reproduction of the Tatianic text itself.

<sup>27</sup>Hill, *Gospel Commentary of S. Ephraem* 83n4. For a translation of Aphraates see F. C. Burkitt, *Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe*, vol. 2: *Introduction and Notes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1904) 181.

These passages are, of course, limited in number and are quite sporadic, involving perhaps only ten percent of the entire text or less.

Two explanations are apropos to this situation. First, in some cases it is possible that the Old Latin, the Old Syriac, and the text of Shem-Tob reflect an ancient form of the separate gospels in which the synoptic texts were closer together in wording than they appear in the modern editions of the Greek New Testament.<sup>28</sup> Second, it is hard to escape the conclusion that several lengthy passages in Shem-Tob corresponding to parallel synoptic accounts and in agreement with the Diatessaron are due to the direct influence of the Diatessaron on the transmission of the text of Shem-Tob. If the Hebrew Matthew contained in the *Even Bohan* predates Shem-Tob and was used by Jews in anti-Christian polemics, as the evidence suggests, it may be that some Tatianic readings, especially the longer passages, were interpolated into the Hebrew text at an early time in order to provide a basis for debate for Jews who lived in areas where the Diatessaron was in use. The fact that they were inserted sporadically points to the selectiveness with which the contestants chose scripture for purposes of debate. If this is the case, the text of Shem-Tob in the relevant passages becomes a valuable Hebrew witness to the Diatessaron.

### Puns, Word Connections, and Alliteration

A major characteristic of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is the use of puns, word connections, and alliteration. Readings portraying these literary devices are numerous and belong to the very structure of the Matthean Gospel. Sometimes such elements can be reproduced in translation but only with great difficulty and usually only by one who is interested in preserving or enhancing the integrity and literary beauty of the base text. There are two reasons to suspect these literary elements here belong to the old substratum to Shem-Tob's Matthew and are the product of an original Hebrew composition, not a translation: (1) The text is so saturated with them (far beyond what appears in the Greek) it does not seem reasonable that any translator, regardless of his motives, would have created them. (2) The polemical nature of the *Even Bohan* proscribes any reasonable suspicion that a fourteenth-century rabbi would have gone out of his way to

<sup>28</sup>George Howard, "Harmonistic Readings in the Old Syriac Gospels," *HTR* 73 (1980): 485.

beautify and otherwise enhance the text of the Gospel of Matthew. The following are examples from each of the three categories listed above.

### Puns

Many of the sayings of Jesus and even narratives about him according to Shem-Tob are constructed around puns and wordplays. Matt 7:6 reads: "do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under foot and turn to attack you." In Shem-Tob the words for "swine" and "turn" are alike, being *hazir* (חזיר) and *yahzor* (יחזר) respectively. Matt 10:25 reads: "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul." In Shem-Tob "master of the house" and "Beelzebul" are *baal habayit* (בעל הבית) and *baal z'vuv* (בעל זבוב) respectively. Matt 10:36 reads: "and a man's foes will be those of his own household." In place of this, Shem-Tob reads: "The enemy will be loved ones," which makes a wordplay on "the enemy" *ha'oyvim* (האויבים) and "loved ones" *'ahuvim* (אהובים). In Matt 17:22 the text in part reads: "The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men." For "Son of Man" Shem-Tob reads *ben ha'adam* (בן האדם) and for "men" *b'ne ha'adam* (בני האדם). Matt 18:27 reads: "And out of pity for him the lord of that servant released him and forgave him the debt." In place of this, Shem-Tob reads the pithy saying: "Then his master had pity on him and forgave him everything." This is a play on the words "to pity" from the root *hamal* (חמל) and "to forgive" from the root *mahal* (מחל). Matt 21:19 reads: "And seeing a fig tree by the wayside he went to it and found nothing on it but leaves only. And he said to it, 'May no fruit ever come from you again'." Shem-Tob in part reads: "he found nothing on it except leaves . . . may fruit not come forth from you for ever." Two wordplays in Hebrew form the structure of this statement as the following diagram shows:

מצא בה רק העלים  
יצא ממך פרי לעולם

The wordplays are made by the combination of *matsa'* (מצא) "found" / *yetse'* (יצא) "come forth" and *ha'alim* (העלים) "leaves" / *'olam* (לעולם) "for ever." Matt 23:27-28 reads in part: "for you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness." So you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." The saying in Shem-Tob contains a play on the words "tombs" from the root *qever* (קבר) and "within" (vs. 28) from the root *qerev* (קרב). Matt 23:29, 31

reads in part: “<sup>29</sup>for you build the tombs of the prophets . . . <sup>31</sup>Thus you witness against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.” For “build” Shem-Tob reads the root *banah* (בנה) and for “sons” the root *ben* (בן).

A rather lengthy passage involving a pun is Matt 16:9-11. It reads: “<sup>9</sup>Do you not yet perceive? Do you not remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? <sup>10</sup>Or the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? <sup>11</sup>How is it that you fail to perceive that I did not speak about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” Shem-Tob’s text is much shorter, lacking all of vs. 10, and contains a different wording. Of primary importance is the fact that in vs. 9 it reads “were left over” *nišru* (נשאר) in place of the Greek “gathered” (ἐλάβετε). This is similar to the word “beware” (vs. 11) which according to the reading of mss ABDEFG of Shem-Tob is *išmru* (תשמר). At this point the British Library ms, accompanied by ms C, reads תשאר which appears to be a visual mistake for the similarly looking reading in the majority text of Shem-Tob. This mistake was perhaps made by a scribe whose eye jumped prematurely to the next word *šor* (שאר) “leaven” which though lacking in Shem-Tob’s text is represented in Greek by ζύμη<sup>29</sup> and appears to have been a part of the original pericope. We conjecture, then, that a pun on the words שאר “left over,” שמר “beware,” and שאר “leaven” stood in the original discourse and that the last word was lost in Hebrew during transmission of the text.

The most famous pun in Greek Matthew occurs at 16:18 where the text reads: “You are Peter (Πέτρος) and on this rock (πέτρος) I will build my church.” Because of the wordplay in Greek August Dell argued that this saying originally circulated in Greek and originated not in Jesus but in the Greek-speaking segment of the church.<sup>30</sup> Although Dell’s argument has some logic, another pun exists in the Hebrew text of Shem-Tob that militates against his conclusion. The Hebrew reads: “You are a *stone* (אבן) and upon you *I will build* (אבנה) my house of prayer.” The pun, *even* (“stone”)—*evneh* (“I will build”), forms the very structure of the saying

<sup>29</sup>Shem-Tob uses שאר opposite ζύμη in Matt 13:13.

<sup>30</sup>August Dell, “Matthäus 16, 17-19,” ZNW 15 (1914): 1-49; “Zur Erklärung von Matthäus 16:17-19,” ZNW 17 (1916): 27-32 See Klijn’s objections in A. F. J. Klijn, “die Wörter ‘Stein’ und ‘Felsen’ in der syrischen Übersetzung des Neuen Testaments,” ZNW 50 (1959): 99-105.

in Shem-Tob. The authenticity of the Hebrew wordplay is suggested by the appearance of the same words in Matt 21:42 which is a quotation of messianic flavor from Ps 118:22: “The very *stone* which the *builders* rejected has become the head of the corner.” Shem-Tob’s text, which equals the Masoretic Text of Ps 118:22, again includes the בנהאבן combination.

### Word Connections

The text of Shem-Tob is replete with word connections that give structure to individual sayings and pericopes and that tie separate sayings and pericopes together. An interesting case is Matt 4:21-23 which in the Hebrew text unites the pericopes on the calling of James and John and the early preaching of Jesus in Galilee. According to the Greek, the brothers, James and John, are sons of Zebedee (Ζεβεδαιο). Beyond the mention of this fact the name “Zebedee” plays no further role in the immediate context. In the Hebrew text the matter is different. Matt 4:21 reads: “He turned from there and saw two other brothers, James and John, brothers who were sons of Zebedee (זבדיאל).” The name “Zebedee” (made up of זבדי and אל) means “gifts of God.”

The next pericope begins with vs. 23. In Hebrew it reads: “Then Jesus went around the land of Galilee teaching their assemblies and was preaching to them the good gift (זבד) . . . of the kingdom of heaven.” The connection is clear. The two pericopes, that is, the calling of James and John and the early preaching of Jesus in Galilee, are held together by the catchword “gift.” The catchword fails to appear in the Greek or Latin although the name Zebedee (= זבדי), meaning “my gift(s),” represents a remnant of the situation.

The sequence of the Matthean pericopes is thus clearly built upon the catchword situation of זבד “gift” although it appears only in the Hebrew. It is highly unlikely that a Jewish polemist of the fourteenth century (or any century), trying to disprove the validity of the Gospel of Matthew, would have created this word connection *ex nihilo*. This means that in all probability the sequence of these pericopes goes back to a Hebrew, not to a Greek or Latin, *Vorlage*.

The following is a list of similar connections that occur in the Hebrew text but *not* in the Greek or Latin. The Hebrew words/roots involved will be placed at the end of each example.

- 5:9-10 <sup>9</sup>Blessed are those who *pursue* (רודפי) peace for they shall be called the sons of God.  
<sup>10</sup>Blessed are those who are *persecuted* (הנרדפים) for righteousness for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
 רדף "to pursue" / רדף "to persecute"
- 5:14-15 <sup>14</sup>A city built upon a hill cannot be *hidden* (להסתר).  
<sup>15</sup>They do not light a lamp to place it in a *hidden* (נסתר) place.  
 סתר "to hide"
- 8:28, 31 <sup>28</sup>There *met him* (ויפגעו בו) two demon-possessed men.  
<sup>31</sup>Then the demons *entreated him* (ויפגעו בו).  
 פגע "to meet" / פגע "to entreat"
- 10:36, 37, 39 <sup>36</sup>The enemy will be *loved ones* (אהובים).  
<sup>37</sup>He who *loves* (האווהב) his father and mother more than me . . .  
<sup>38</sup>[omitted in Shem-Tob]  
<sup>39</sup>He who *loves* (האווהב) his life will lose it.  
 אהב "to love"
- 11:8, 10 <sup>8</sup>Those who wear noble garments are in the houses of *kings* (המלכים).  
<sup>10</sup>This is he about whom it is written: behold, I am sending *my messenger* (מלאכי).  
 מלך "king" / מלאך "messenger"
- 12:13, 15 <sup>13</sup>Then he said to the man: *stretch out* (נטה) your hand and he *stretched out* (ויט) his hand and it returned as the other.  
<sup>15</sup>It came to pass after this Jesus knew and *turned aside* (ויט) from there.  
 נטה "to stretch out" / נטה "to turn aside"
- 14:35, 36 <sup>35</sup>They brought to him all those who were *sick* (החולים) with various kinds of diseases.  
<sup>36</sup>*They implored* (וחלו) him. . . .  
 חלה "to be sick" / חלה "to implore"
- 15:34-37 <sup>34</sup>They answered: *seven* (שבעה) and a few fish.  
<sup>35</sup>So Jesus commanded the people to sit upon the grass.  
<sup>36</sup>Then he took the *seven* (השבעה) loaves and broke them and gave them to his disciples and they gave to the people.  
<sup>37</sup>All of them ate and were *satisfied* (וישבעו) and from that which was remaining they filled *seven* (שבעה) seahs.  
 שבעה "seven" / שבע "to be satisfied"
- 18:16 <sup>16</sup>If he does not listen to you, reprove him before another; if by every oath he does not listen to you add *still* (עוד) one or two in order that your words might be before two or three *witnesses* (עדים) because by two or three *witnesses* (עדים) a word will be established.  
 עוד "still" / עד "witness"

18:23-35

- <sup>23</sup>At that time Jesus said to his disciples: the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who sat to make a reckoning with his servants and ministers.
- <sup>24</sup>As he began to reckon, one came who owed about ten thousand pieces of gold.
- <sup>25</sup>But he had nothing to give and his master commanded to sell him and his children and all that was his to *repay* (לשלם) the value.
- <sup>26</sup>The servant fell before his master and implored him to have pity on him and to be patient with him because he would *repay* (ישלם) everything.
- <sup>27</sup>Then his master had pity on him and forgave him everything.
- <sup>28</sup>But that servant went out and found one of his comrades who owed him a hundred pieces of money and he grasped him and struck him saying. . . .
- <sup>29</sup>Trust me and be patient with me and I will *repay* (אשלם) everything.
- <sup>30</sup>But he was not willing to listen to him; so they brought him to the prison until he *repaid* (שלם) him everything.
- <sup>31</sup>The servants of the king saw that which he did and were very angry and went and told their master.
- <sup>32</sup>Then his master called him and said to him: cursed servant, did I not forgive you all your (debt) when you placated me.
- <sup>33</sup>So why did you not forgive your servant when he supplicated you as I forgave you?
- <sup>34</sup>His master was angry with him and commanded to afflict him until he should *repay* (ישלם) him all the debt.
- <sup>35</sup>Thus will my Father who is in heaven do to you if you do not forgive each man his brother with a *perfect* (שלם) heart.  
 שלם "to repay" / שלם "perfect"
- <sup>9</sup>He who takes her who has been *divorced* (הגרופה) commits adultery.
- 19:9, 13 <sup>13</sup>Then they brought children to him that he might lay his hand on them and pray for them, but his disciples were *driving* (מגרשים) them away.  
 גרש "to divorce" / גרש "to drive away"
- 21:37-38, 46 <sup>37</sup>Finally, he sent them his son saying: perhaps they will *honor* (יראו) my son.  
<sup>38</sup>The workers *saw* (ויראו) his son and said to one another: this is the heir. Come, let us kill him and we will inherit his estate.  
<sup>46</sup>Then they sought to kill him but they *feared* (ויראו) the crowds to whom he was a prophet.  
 ירא "to honor/fear" / ראה "to see"

- 26:9-11 <sup>9</sup>It would have been possible to have sold it for a great price and to have given it to the *poor* (לעניים).  
<sup>10</sup>But Jesus who knows everything in regard to any *matter* (ענין) done, said to them: . . .  
<sup>11</sup>Because the *poor* (העניים) will be with you always.  
 עני "poor" / ענין "matter"
- 26:28, 34-36 <sup>28</sup>This is my blood of the new covenant which was poured out for many for the *atonement* (לכפרת) of sins.  
<sup>34</sup>Jesus said: truly I say to you, this night before the cock-crow you will *deny* (תכפור) me three times.  
<sup>35</sup>Peter said to him: if it is possible for me to die with you, I will not *deny* (אכפור) you. . . .  
<sup>36</sup>Then Jesus came with them to the *village* (לכפר) of Geshemonim and said: sit now until I go there and pray.  
 כפרה "atonement" / כפר "to deny" / כפר "village"

### Alliteration

In the following passages alliteration of various kinds occurs. The relevant words in Hebrew will be placed in parentheses, pointed, and transliterated.

- 4:12 It came to pass in those days Jesus heard that John had been delivered up (נִמְסָר, *nimsar*) into prison (בְּמַאֲסָר, *b'ma'asar*).  
 He turned from there and saw two  
 4:21 other brothers (אֲחִים אֲחֵרִים, *'ahim 'aherim*).  
 If you should offer your gift (תִּקְרִיב קֶרְבָּנְךָ, *taqriv qarbankha*) at the altar and remember that you have a quarrel with  
 5:23 your companion (חֲבֵרְךָ, *h'verkha*).<sup>31</sup>  
 With what judgment you judge and with what measure you measure  
 7:2 it will be measured to you (בְּאֵיזֶה דִּין תִּדְוֹנוּ וּבְאֵיזֶה מִדָּה תִּמְדּוּ לָכֵן, *b'eze din tidonu uv'eze midah tamodu y'moded lakhem*).  
 9:8 The crowds saw (וַיֵּרְאוּ, *vayir'u*) and feared (וַיִּירְאוּ, *vayir'u*).<sup>32</sup>  
 11:6 Blessed is the one who (וְאִשְׁרֵי אֲשֶׁר, *v'ašre 'ašer*).  
 11:29 Take my yoke upon you (עוּלִי עִלְיִכֶם, *'uli 'alekhem*) and learn of me and know that I am meek (עֲנִי אֲנִי, *'ani 'ani*).

<sup>31</sup>See also 8:4. Cf. Jean Carmignac, "Studies in the Hebrew Background of the Synoptic Gospels," *ASJ* 7 (1970): 72.

<sup>32</sup>Carmignac spotted this wordplay without benefit of the Shem-Tob text. See *ibid*.

- 12:15 Many sick (חולים, *holim*) followed him and he healed all of them (כולם, *kulam*).  
 This one does not cast out demons except  
 12:24 by Beelzebub (בְּבַעַל זְבוּיָב, *b'va'al zivuv*)  
 the lord of demons (בַּעַל הַשְּׂדִים, *ba'al hašedim*).  
 14:32 When they went up into a boat  
 the wind settled down (נָחוּ הָרוּחַ, *nah haruah*).  
 18:9 If your eye causes you to stumble (תִּכְשִׁילֶךָ, *takhšilekha*) . . .  
 cast (תִּשְׁלִיכֶהָ, *tašlikheha*) it from you.

### The Divine Name

A set of interesting readings in the Hebrew Matthew of Shem-Tob is a series of passages incorporating the Divine Name symbolized by ה' (apparently a circumlocution for הַשֵּׁם, 'The Name'). This occurs some nineteen times. (Fully written הַשֵּׁם occurs at 28:9 and is included in the nineteen.) Usually the Divine Name appears where the Greek reads κύριος, twice (21:12 mss, 22:31) where the Greek reads θεός, and twice where it occurs alone (22:32; 27:9). (1) It regularly appears in quotations from the Hebrew Bible where the MT contains the Tetragrammaton. (2) It occurs in introductions to quotations as, for example, at 1:22, "All this was to complete what was written by the prophet according to the LORD"; and at 22:31, "Have you not read concerning the resurrection of the dead that the LORD spoke to you saying." (3) In narratives apart from quotations it occurs in such phrases as "angel of the LORD" or "house of the LORD." Thus, 2:13, "As they were going, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared unto Joseph saying"; 2:19, "It came to pass when King Herod died the angel of the LORD appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt"; 21:12, "Then Jesus entered the house of the LORD"; 28:2, "Then the earth was shaken because the angel of the LORD descended from heaven to the tomb, overturned the stone, and stood still."

The reading of the Divine Name in a Christian document quoted by a Jewish polemist is remarkable. If this were a Hebrew translation of a Greek or Latin Christian document, one would expect to find *adonai* in the text, not a symbol for the ineffable divine name YHWH. Furthermore, for Shem-Tob the Gospel of Matthew was an object of attack, a heretical writing that needed to be exposed for its fallacies. For him to have added the ineffable name is inexplicable. The evidence strongly suggests that Shem-Tob received his Matthew with the Divine Name already within the text and that

he probably preserved it rather than run the risk of being guilty of removing it.<sup>33</sup>

The evidence from Shem-Tob's Matthew coincides with the present writer's earlier stated conclusions about the use of the Tetragrammaton in the Septuagint and the Greek New Testament.<sup>34</sup> The extant pre-Christian copies of the Septuagint that include passages incorporating the Divine Name preserve the Divine Name in the Greek text. These are (1) P. Fuad 266 (= Rahlfs 848), 50 BCE, contains the Tetragrammaton in Aramaic letters;<sup>35</sup> (2) a fragmentary scroll of the Twelve Prophets in Greek from Wadi Khabra (= W. Khabra XII καίγε), 50 BCE–50 CE, contains the Tetragrammaton in paleo-Hebrew letters;<sup>36</sup> (3) 4QLXX<sup>Lev</sup> (= Rahlfs 802), first century BCE, contains the Tetragrammaton in the form of ΙΑΩ.<sup>37</sup> From these examples it may be concluded that the New Testament writers had access to copies of LXX that contained the Hebrew Divine Name. Those who used such copies of LXX for their quotations of the Old Testament probably

<sup>33</sup>Cf. the famous rabbinic passage, t. Šabb. 13.5: "The margins and books of the minim do not save." The debate that follows about what is to be done with heretical books concerns the issue of the divine names, אֱלֹהִים, in them. R. José suggests the divine name should be cut out and the rest of the document burned. R. Tarphon and R. Ishmael say the books in their entirety, including the divine name, should be destroyed. See Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash*, 155–57. By incorporating the Hebrew Matthew into his *Even Bohan*, Shem-Tob apparently felt compelled to preserve the Divine Name along with the rest of the text. "ה" in Shem-Tob's Matthew should not be viewed as a symbol for both Adonai and the Tetragrammaton as was customary for Hebrew documents copied during the Middle Ages. The author of the Hebrew Matthew uses Adonai and "ה" discriminately. He uses Adonai in reference to Jesus and "ה" only in reference to God. Since אֱלֹהִים (often itself abbreviated as אֱלֹהִים) refers to Jesus, not God, throughout the text, the author's use of "ה" is a symbol only for the Tetragrammaton and in all probability stands for the circumlocution הַשֵּׁם, "The Name."

<sup>34</sup>See George Howard, "The Tetragram and the New Testament," *JBL* 96 (1977): 63–83; idem, "The Name of God in the New Testament," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 4 (1978): 12–14, 56.

<sup>35</sup>Françoise Dunand, *Etudes de Papyrologie* (Cairo, 1971). W. G. Waddell, "The Tetragrammaton in the LXX," *JTS* 45 (1944): 158–61. George Howard, "The Oldest Greek Text of Deuteronomy," *HUCA* 42 (1971): 125–31.

<sup>36</sup>D. Barthélemy, "Redécouverte d'un chaînon manquant de l'histoire de la Septante," *Revue Biblique* 60 (1953): 18–29; idem, *Les devanciers d'Aquila: Première publication intégrale du text des fragments du Dodecaprophète*, VTSup 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1963).

<sup>37</sup>P. W. Skehan, "The Qumran Manuscripts and Textual Criticism," *Volume du Congrès, Strasbourg 1956*, VTSup 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1957) 148–60.

preserved the Tetragrammaton in the quotations incorporated into their texts.<sup>38</sup>

Although written in Hebrew, Shem-Tob's Matthew further testifies to the use of the Divine Name in the New Testament. Its conservative use of the Divine Name, which occurs only in quotations from the Hebrew Bible, introductions to the quotations, or in biblical phrases such as "angel of the LORD," and "house of the LORD," corresponds closely to the use of the Tetragrammaton in the Hebrew documents from among the Dead Sea Scrolls. As was concluded in 1977, "In the Hebrew documents from the Judean Desert the Tetragram appears in copies of the Bible, in quotations of the Bible, and in biblical-type passages such as *florilegia* and biblical paraphrases. Occasionally, it appears in non-biblical material; but this is not often and the material is Bible-like in nature."<sup>39</sup>

### Theological Tendencies in Shem-Tob's Matthew

In some instances the Hebrew Matthew of Shem-Tob shows theological tendencies not found in the Greek. It is unlikely these variances were introduced by a medieval Jewish translator, especially someone who was engaged in polemical disputation with Christians, because they either portray Christianity more, not less, attractively or fail to enhance the Jewish polemic against Christianity. Instead, they appear to belong to a more primitive form of the Matthean tradition than the Greek Matthew. During the early Christian centuries the disparity between Judaism and Christianity gradually increased. But the theological variances in Shem-Tob's Hebrew text often reflect a lesser disparity between the two religions than does the Greek text. An example is Jesus' attitude toward the law, a subject treated in Matthew 5. Matt 5:17–19 gives Jesus' statement about the per-durability of the law:

Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all

<sup>38</sup>See further Patrick W. Skehan, "The Divine Name at Qumran, in the Masada Scroll, and in the Septuagint," *BIOCS* 13 (1980): 14–44; A. Pietersma, "Kyrios or Tetragram: A Renewed Quest for the Original Septuagint," in *De Septuaginta. Studies in Honour of John William Wevers on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. A. Pietersma and C. Cox (Toronto: Benben Publications, 1984) 85–101.

<sup>39</sup>Howard, "The Tetragram and the New Testament," 71.

is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

There follows in Matt 5:21-48 the so-called antitheses.<sup>40</sup> Each antithesis first quotes from the law (except the last one) and then gives Jesus' extension or comment on the law. The form is basically the same in each antithesis: "You have heard that it was said. . . . But I say to you. . . ." The subjects are killing, adultery, divorce, false swearing, the *lex talionis*, and hating your enemies.

In the Greek text of Matthew, Jesus' comment on some of the antitheses—like killing and adultery—seems to radicalize and internalize the law without, however, revoking it. In other antitheses—divorce and false swearing—Jesus' comment seems to revoke and annul the letter of the law. At least this is true in the Greek Matthew. But in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew that is not the case with respect to divorce and false swearing. Instead, in these instances, Jesus' comment in the antitheses suggests he is radicalizing and internalizing the law but not revoking it. It may well be that here the Greek Matthew represents a later corrective to the more ancient statements in the Hebrew, made only after the disparity between Church and Synagogue grew. Compare the Greek Matthew and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew on divorce and false swearing:

#### Divorce (Matt 5:31-32)

[Greek]

It was also said, "Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce." But I say to you that every one who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, makes her an adulteress. . . .

(RSV)

[Hebrew]

Again Jesus said to his disciples: "You have heard what was said to those of long ago that everyone who leaves his wife and divorces [her] is to give her a bill of divorce. . . . And I say to you that everyone who leaves his wife *is to give her a bill of divorce*. But concerning adultery, he is the one who commits adultery. . . ."

<sup>40</sup>For an excellent discussion of the issue see John P. Meier, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1976).

#### False Swearing (Matt 5:33-37)

[Greek]

Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, "You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn." But I say to you, do not swear *at all*, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God. . . .

(RSV)

[Hebrew]

Again you have heard what was said to those of long ago: you shall not swear *by my name* falsely, but you shall return to the Lord your oath. But I say to you not to swear *in vain by anything*, either by heaven because it is the throne of God. . . .

The differences between the Greek and Hebrew are striking. In the Greek Jesus seems to revoke the law. In the Hebrew, he internalizes and radicalizes it, but does not revoke it.

Another difference between the Greek and Hebrew Matthew is in the character of John the Baptist. We know from other sources that there was a John the Baptist sect that existed from early times and continued perhaps for centuries.<sup>41</sup> In Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew John the Baptist emerges as a much more important figure than in the Greek Matthew. The Greek Matthew may well represent a later corrective to the more primitive statements made about John the Baptist in Hebrew Matthew before the followers of John the Baptist were seen as a threat to trunkline Christianity. Here are some of the differences between the Hebrew and Greek texts in the portrayal of John the Baptist.

#### Matthew 11:11

[Greek]

Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has risen no one greater than John the Baptist: *yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he*.

(RSV)

[Hebrew]

Truly I say to you, among all those born of women none has arisen greater than John the Baptizer.

[The last phrase in Greek is lacking in Shem-Tob's Hebrew text.]

#### Matthew 11:13

[Greek]

For all the prophets and the law prophesied *until* John.

(RSV)

[Hebrew]

For all the prophets and the law spoke *concerning* John.

<sup>41</sup>Cf. Acts 18:5-19:7; Justin, *Trypho* 80; *Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions* 1.54.60. Cf. C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John* (London: S.P.C.K., 1962) 142; Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, Anchor Bible 29A, 29B (Garden City NY: Doubleday, 1966) A:lxvii-lxx.



## Matthew 17:11

[Greek]

Elijah does come, and he is to restore all things. (RSV)

[Vs 13 tells us that "the disciples understood that (Jesus) was speaking to them of John the Baptist." (RSV)]

[Hebrew]

Indeed Elijah will come and will save all the world.

In Matt 21:31-32 Jesus speaks harsh words to those who failed to heed the warnings of John the Baptist: "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the harlots believed him; and even when you saw it, you did not afterward repent and believe him" (RSV). In the Greek Matthew these harsh words are said to the chief priests and the elders of the people (vs 23), but in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew these harsh words are spoken to Jesus' own disciples (vs 28) and the following comment, lacking in the Greek text, appears: "He who has ears to hear let him hear in disgrace."

This series of readings can hardly be taken lightly. They point to an ancient tradition in which John the Baptist was even more important than the portrayal of him given in the Greek text of Matthew.

## Different Interpretations in Shem-Tob's Matthew

There are several passages in the Hebrew Matthew that differ in meaning from the Greek Matthew. Occasionally the Hebrew appears to be more primitive than the Greek. A few instances will be noted.

In the Beelzebul (Hebrew: Beelzebub) controversy, recorded in Matt 12:24-28, the Greek version reads as follows:

<sup>24</sup>But when the Pharisees heard it they said, "It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons." <sup>25</sup>Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand; <sup>26</sup>and if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? <sup>27</sup>And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judge. <sup>28</sup>But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." (RSV)

A common understanding of this passage is: (1) Jesus rejects the Beelzebul charge as totally inappropriate.<sup>42</sup> (2) Verse 27 is taken to refer to Jewish exorcisms with the meaning that if Jesus casts out demons by the power of Satan the same is true of the Pharisees' own disciples, an argument designed to turn the tables against the opponents.<sup>43</sup> (3) Verse 28 concludes that if Jesus casts out demons by the Spirit of God, in some sense the kingdom of God has already come.

In the Hebrew text the matter is different. Most of the wording is basically the same with two exceptions: (1) Verse 27 reads: "If I cast out demons by Beelzebub why do your sons *not* cast them out?" This is the opposite of what is implied by the Greek, namely, that Jewish exorcists are casting out demons.<sup>44</sup> (2) In verse 28, instead of "then the kingdom of God has come upon you," the Hebrew reads "truly the end of the [his—G.H.] kingdom has come." In regard to the Hebrew text the following points should be made. First, although the case is different with him, Jesus does not reject as inappropriate the exorcising of demons by the power of Satan. He even queries why the sons of the Pharisees do not avail themselves of this means of bringing Satan's kingdom to an end. After all, a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand, so the turning of Satan against himself is a sure way of destroying Satan. Second, the fact is Jesus casts out demons, not by Beelzebub, but by the Spirit of God. This elicits the conclusion "truly the end of the kingdom is come." The reading in the Hebrew Matthew of "the kingdom" instead of the Greek "the kingdom of God" appears to refer to the kingdom of Satan rather than to the kingdom of God with the meaning that if Jesus casts out demons not by Beelzebub, which

<sup>42</sup>Cf. H. B. Green, *The Gospel according to Matthew* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975) 127: "If Jesus' exorcisms show him to be in league with the devil, he is using Satan's power against Satan's own agents, and this is a situation that cannot continue."

<sup>43</sup>Cf. David Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew* (London: Oliphants, 1972) 216: "The sons of the Pharisees (i.e., their disciples or pupils) would be the first to condemn the intransigent attitude shown to Jesus because it implied that they were in league with Satan."

<sup>44</sup>This reading may be related to the targumic device of converse translation. See Michael L. Klein, "Converse Translations: A Targumic Technique," *Biblica* 57 (1976): 515-37. Here, so as not to prejudice the case, it should be understood as a converse construction, and not a converse translation. For other examples see *el* at Mark 8:12 and parallels, *el mē* at Mark 8:14 and parallels, *ὀπισθεν/ἐμπροσθεν* at Matt 15:23, *οὐκ* (Codex B) at Matt 12:32, and the absence of *οὐκ* in P<sup>66</sup> at John 9:27. For further examples in Shem-Tob vis-à-vis the Greek see 10:17 and 19:22.



itself would bring Satan's kingdom to an end, so much the more will he destroy Satan's kingdom by casting out demons by the Spirit of God.

There appears to be a progression of thought here. The Hebrew text portrays Jesus as deeming appropriate the exorcising of demons by the power of Beelzebub, even though he himself performs exorcisms by a more effective means, the power of the Holy Spirit. The Greek, on the other hand, rejects with revulsion the very idea of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub. Should we not regard the Greek's rejection of any amicable relationship between Jesus and Satan, even to the extent of Jesus using Satan to destroy Satan, as a later reflection of an increasing disparity between Judaism and the new Christian religion in which Christ was accused of being possessed by demons?

The pericope on the Canaanite woman, found in Matt 15:21-38, presents the reader with two difficulties. The most notable is the harshness with which Jesus addresses the desperate mother who pleads for mercy for her demon-possessed daughter. Verse 26 records his answer: "It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." Beare remarks: "The harshness of the saying of Jesus . . . still puzzles the Christian reader, who finds it impossible to imagine Jesus addressing a distraught mother in such terms. . . . Dare we see in all this a reflection of the reluctance with which the primitive Church embarked upon the Gentile mission?"<sup>45</sup>

A second problem is the inappropriateness of Jesus' answer to his disciples who ask him to send the woman away. Jesus responds: "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (vs. 24). But this is a reason for sending her away, not for allowing her to stay. It thus fails to explain his actions.

In the Hebrew text the inappropriateness of this answer disappears because the question of the disciples is different. According to the Hebrew, verse 23 reads: "Our master, why do you leave this woman alone who is crying out after us?" The implication appears to be: Why do you not deal with this woman by healing her daughter? After all, she is crying out for help. Jesus' answer in verse 24 is now appropriate: "they did not send me except to the lost sheep from the house of Israel." The meaning is that Jesus does not wish to heal this woman's daughter because she does not belong to Israel.

The first problem regarding the harshness of Jesus' response to the woman, however, remains in the Hebrew text. Some attempt has been made to soften Jesus' words by combining several verses in Matthew in such a way as to show a progression of thought. Matt 15:24, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," is combined with Matt 10:5-6, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," in order to show that during his earthly ministry Jesus confined his efforts to Israel alone. These passages are then contrasted with the conclusion of the Gospel, Matt 28:19-20, which reads "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. . . ." Here the risen Christ is shown to extend his ministry to include all nations. This contrast suggests that Matthew's Gospel presents a kind of salvation-history schema wherein Jesus' restricted earthly ministry is expanded in the postresurrection period to include the Gentiles. Meier writes: "This same Jesus who, during his earthly ministry, forbids the Twelve a mission among the Gentiles and Samaritans is also the Jesus who, as the exalted Son of Man, commands the Eleven to make disciples of *panta ta ethnē*."<sup>46</sup>

This solution is impossible from the standpoint of the Hebrew text. Although Matt 10:5-6 and 15:24 in Hebrew correspond in meaning to the Greek, Matt 28:19-20 does not. In Hebrew these last two verses read simply: "Go and teach them to carry out all the things that I have commanded you forever." No mention is made of Gentiles or all nations and no salvation-history schema is possible.

Again a progression of thought is apparent. The Hebrew Matthew portrays Jesus the Jew holding to the very end the traditional position of Israel's supremacy. The Greek Matthew, without rejecting the idea of Israel's supremacy for Jesus during his lifetime, redeems the situation by having the risen Christ extend his power to include all nations into the kingdom of God.

There are a number of such passages in the Hebrew Matthew that differ from the Greek. A listing of several other examples follows.

<sup>45</sup>Francis W. Beare, *The Earliest Records of Jesus* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962) 132-33.

<sup>46</sup>Meier, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel*, 27.

19:6	Greek	What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.
	Hebrew	Whatever the creator has joined together man is <i>unable</i> to separate.
19:22	Greek	When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions.
	Hebrew	It came to pass when the young man heard he went away (angry) because he did <i>not</i> have much property.
19:29	Greek	And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or fathers or mothers or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.
	Hebrew	Everyone who leaves his house (and his brothers), also his sisters, his father, his mother, <i>his wife</i> , and his children for my name will receive (a hundred) like them and will inherit the kingdom of heaven.
26:13	Greek	Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.
	Hebrew	Truly, I say to you, everywhere this gospel . . . is proclaimed in all the world, that which this one has done will be said in reference to <i>my</i> memory.
28:6	Greek	Come, see the place where he lay.
	Hebrew	Come, therefore, and see the place where the Lord <i>arose</i> .

### Passages Suggesting a Variant Hebrew Substratum for the Greek

Assuming that Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew represents Hebrew composition (even though corrupted by medieval Jewish scribes), it is interesting to note that some differences between the Hebrew and Greek Matthew are similar to those between the Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible and the Greek translation of it. The following discussion demonstrates this point.

A number of differences in the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Jewish Bible go back to different vocalizations of Hebrew words or to similar-looking Hebrew words. Here are some typical examples:

Amos 1:6	MT	גלות שלמה	entire exile
	LXX	αἰχμαλωσίαν τοῦ Σαλωμων	

The Greek apparently stands for *שלמה*, a different vocalization for the same consonantal text as read by MT.

Amos 3:15	MT	וספו	and will come to an end
	LXX	καὶ προστεθήσονται	

The Greek text apparently stands for *ונוספו*, a form close in appearance to MT, and may represent a variant Hebrew *Vorlage* which LXX translated. We, of course, do not possess a Hebrew text of Amos that reads *ונוספו*, so in this case the theory of a variant *Vorlage* cannot be tested. The next example, however, provides us the data needed to test the theory.

Ex 3:6	MT	אבִּיךָ	your father
	SamPent	אֲבֹתֶיךָ	
	Acts 7:32	τῶν πατέρων σου	

The statement in Acts is a quotation from Exodus 3:6 that according to MT reads the singular for "father." Since Acts reads the plural one could argue that it reflects a variant Hebrew *Vorlage* which contained the plural form *אֲבֹתֶיךָ*. The certainty of this can be demonstrated by the fact that the Samaritan Pentateuch reads this exact form. The difference in the two Hebrew forms is, of course, an addition of only one letter.

Variations like these often form the difference between Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew and the Greek Matthew. An example is Matt 8:21. Here the Greek reads "Another (ἄλλος) of his disciples"; the Hebrew reads "One (אחד) of his disciples." Although we are without data to prove what word actually stood in a theoretical Hebrew substratum to the Greek, a strong case can be made for the word *אחר* which is often rendered by *ἄλλος* in LXX (cf. Gen 4:25, 8:10, and so forth). Furthermore, confusion between *ר* and *ד* is one of the most common causes for variation in ancient Hebrew documents due to the fact that these letters are so similar in appearance. It could be conjectured, then, that the difference in Shem-Tob's text and the Greek go back to different Hebrew texts which read *אחר* and *אחר* respectively.

Another example is Matt 11:5. The Greek reads "and the poor have the *good news preached* (εὐαγγελίζονται) to them." The Hebrew reads "and the poor are *acquitted* (מתפשרים)." In LXX the word *εὐαγγελίζεν* consistently stands for the root *בשר* (cf. 1 Kings 31:9, 2 Kings 1:20, 18:31, and so forth). One can argue, then, that this root stood here in a Hebrew substratum to the Greek text. If so, the appropriate form would be *מתבשרים* which is similar in appearance to *מתפשרים*. It is interesting that mss EF of Shem-Tob actually read the conjectural form, and in all prob-

ability represent a later revision designed to bring the Hebrew into correspondence with the canonical Greek/Latin text.<sup>47</sup>

We append here a list of several other examples.

- 3:11 I baptize you *with water* (ἐν ὕδατι) unto repentance.  
I baptize you *in the days of* (בִּימֵי) repentance.  
Greek: with water = בָּמִים  
Shem-Tob: in the days of = בִּימֵי
- 5:4 Blessed are those who *mourn* (οἱ πενθοῦντες).  
Blessed are those who *wait* (הַחוּכִים).  
Greek: mourn = הַבוֹכִים<sup>48</sup>  
Shem-Tob: wait = הַחוּכִים
- 7:4 *Allow* (ἄφες) me to cast the mote out.  
*Wait* (כתר) for me . . . and I will cast the straw out.  
Greek: allow = הָתַר  
Shem-Tob: wait = כָּתַר
- 7:6 Do not give *that which is holy* (τὸ ἅγιον) to the dogs.  
Do not give *holy flesh* (בָּשָׂר קֹדֶשׁ) to the dogs.  
Greek: that which is holy = אֲשֶׁר קֹדֶשׁ  
Shem-Tob: holy flesh = בָּשָׂר קֹדֶשׁ
- 7:11 If you being evil *know* (οἶδατε) to give good gifts.  
If you being evil *come* (תבואו) to give good gifts.  
Greek: know = תְּבִינוּ  
Shem-Tob: come = תְּבִאוּ<sup>49</sup>
- 7:29 For he was teaching them as one having authority  
and not *as* (ὡς) their scribes.  
For he was preaching to them with great power,  
not *as the rest* (כַּשָּׂאֵר) of the sages.  
Greek: as = כַּאֲשֶׁר  
Shem-Tob: as the rest = כַּשָּׂאֵר
- 8:26 Why are you *fearful* (δειλοί)?  
Why do you *look* (תראו)?  
Greek: fearful = תִּירָאוּ  
Shem-Tob: look = תִּרְאוּ

<sup>47</sup>Lachs conjectured that the original Hebrew read "the poor are made rich" (מִתְעַשְׂרִים). See Samuel Tobias Lachs, "Hebrew Elements in the Gospels and Acts," *JQR* 71 (1980): 38-39.

<sup>48</sup>For πενθεῖν = בָּכָה see Gen 23:2.

<sup>49</sup>Mss DE read תְּבִיאוּ.

- 9:34 By the *prince* (ἄρχοντι) of demons he cast out demons.  
By the *name of* (בִּשְׁם) demons he cast out demons.  
Greek: by the prince = בָּשָׂר  
Shem-Tob: by the name of = בִּשְׁם
- 11:8 What did you go out to see?  
A man clothed in *soft* (μαλακοῖς) clothing?  
What did you go out to see?  
. . . a man clothed in *noble* (רְבִים) garments?  
Greek: soft = רִכִּים  
Shem-Tob: noble = רְבִים<sup>50</sup>
- 13:48 When it was full, they drew it up *on the shore* (ἐπὶ τὸν αἰγιαλόν).  
When it is full they draw it *out* (לחור).  
Greek: on the shore = לְחוּף  
Shem-Tob: out = לְחוּץ
- 18:30 But going he *cast* (ἔβαλεν) him into prison.  
So he *brought him* (ויוליכֵהוּ, mss ABDEFG) to prison.  
Greek: cast him = וישליכֵהוּ  
Shem-Tob: brought him = ויוליכֵהוּ
- 21:23 The chief priests *and the elders of the people* (καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τοῦ λαοῦ).  
The priests *and the rulers of the people* (וּקְצִינֵי הָעָם).  
Greek: and the elders of the people = וּקְנֵי הָעָם  
Shem-Tob: and the rulers of the people = וּקְצִינֵי הָעָם
- 22:23 On that day the Sadducees *came to* (προσῆλθον) him.  
On that day the Sadducees *met* (קראו) him.  
Greek: came to = קָרְבוּ  
Shem-Tob: met = קָרְאוּ
- 23:37 Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets  
and *stones* (λιθοβολοῦσα) those sent to her.  
Jerusalem, who kills the prophets  
and *removes* (ומסלקת) those who are sent.  
Greek: stones = וּמַסְקֵלָת  
Shem-Tob: removes = וּמַסְלֵקָת
- 24:6 See that you are not *alarmed* (θροεῖσθε).  
Beware lest you become *foolish* (תהבלו).  
Greek: alarmed = תִּהְבְּלוּ  
Shem-Tob: foolish = תִּהְבְּלוּ

<sup>50</sup>See Luke 7:25: ἐνδόξω = רְבִים (?).

- 26:23 He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me *will betray me* (με παραδώσει).  
He who dips his hand with me in the dish *will sell me* (ימכרני).  
Greek: will betray me = ימסרני  
Shem-Tob: will sell me = ימכרני
- 26:30 And they sang a hymn (καὶ ὑμνήσαντες) and went out to the Mount of Olives.  
And they returned (וישבו, mss ABEF) and went out to the Mount of Olives.  
Greek: and they sang a hymn = וישרו  
Shem-Tob: and they returned = וישבו
- 26:53 Do you think that I am not able to entreat my Father (παρακαλέσαι τὸν πετέρα μου)?  
Do you not understand that I am able to meet my enemies (לפגוע באויבי)?  
Greek: to entreat my father = לפגוע באבי  
Shem-Tob: to meet my enemies = לפגוע באויבי
- 28:6 Come see the place where the Lord lay (ἔκειτο).  
Come, therefore, and see the place where the Lord arose (עמד).  
Greek: lay = למעץ<sup>51</sup>  
Shem-Tob: arose = עמד

### Shem-Tob's Text and Synoptic Variation

Assuming that Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew represents Hebrew composition (even though corrupted by medieval Jewish scribes) it is interesting to note that sometimes it provides suggestions for the cause of variation in parallel passages in the Greek synoptic gospels. In these instances it resembles the Masoretic Text (MT) which explains differences in parallel passages in the Septuagint. Two examples from the Hebrew Bible will be followed by several examples from Matthew.

1 Kings 8:16 | שבטי ישראל ] σκήπτρῳ Ἰσραήλ  
2 Chronicles 6:5 | שבטי ישראל ] φυλῶν Ἰσραήλ

In this set of synoptic passages שבטי is translated "scepter" by LXX in 1 Kings and "tribes" in 2 Chronicles. The word שבט is a polysemous word which can mean either. The synoptic variation, therefore, simply reflects different renditions of the same Hebrew *Vorlage*.

<sup>51</sup>In Jer 24:1 κειμένους renders מועדים.

2 Samuel 10:8 | השער ] πύλης  
1 Chronicles 19:9 | העיר ] πόλεως

This set of synoptic parallels presents an example of variation due to different though similar-appearing *Vorlagen*. It is well known that the author of Chronicles used a copy of Samuel that sometimes varied from the MT of Samuel.<sup>52</sup> In the present case MT of Samuel reads השער "the gate" while the copy of Samuel used by the Chronicler apparently read העיר "the city." In each instance LXX gives the appropriate translation.

Similarly, the text of Shem-Tob provides clues to some variant readings in the synoptic gospel parallels. It either reads one word with two or more meanings (often based on differing vocalizations), each of which is now reflected in Greek synoptic parallels, or one word that is visually similar to another that theoretically stood in a variant Hebrew substratum to a synoptic parallel. An example of a single Hebrew word differently vocalized may be the following.

Matt 12:50 | μου ἀδελφός  
Mark 3:35 | ἀδελφός μου  
Luke 8:21 | ἀδελφοί μου  
Shem-Tob | אחי

The Greek texts of Matthew and Mark read "my brother." Luke differs by reading "my brothers." The text of Shem-Tob can be either singular or plural depending on its vocalization, whether אחי "my brother" or אחיך "my brothers." It thus suggests the possibility that the synoptic variants were caused by different vocalizations of the same Hebrew word.

The next example of synoptic variation may have been caused by one Hebrew consonantal text that theoretically can reflect different Hebrew roots.

Matt 23:31 | ὅτι υἱοί ἐστε  
Luke 11:48 | ὑμεῖς δὲ οἰκοδομεῖτε  
Shem-Tob | שבנים אתם

These Greek phrases occupy corresponding parts in a saying against the scribes and Pharisees. According to Black (following Torrey) υἱοί ἐστε

<sup>52</sup>A number of students of Frank Cross have written on this subject. Among them see J. D. Shenkel, "A Comparative Study of the Synoptic Parallels in I Paralipomena and II Reigns," *HTR* 62 (1969): 63-85; Eugene C. Ulrich, Jr., *The Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus* (Missoula MT: Scholars Press, 1978).

(“you are sons”) and ὑμεῖς δὲ οἰκοδομεῖτε (“you build”) may go back to Aramaic אַתּוֹן בְּנִין אַתּוֹן (understanding בְּנִין and בְּנִין respectively).<sup>53</sup> A similar explanation based on a Hebrew substratum is supplied by the reading in Shem-Tob: בְּנִים אַתּם “you are sons.” If the text is vocalized בְּנִים אַתּם the translation is “you build.”<sup>54</sup> The word בְּנִים is plural of בֶּן “son”; בְּנִים is plural masculine participle of בָּנָה “to build.”

It is noteworthy that these two roots alternate elsewhere in Hebrew literature. A Midrash (Bab. Tal. Berakot 64 a) based on Isaiah 54:13 containing an *’al tigre*<sup>55</sup> reading is:

The disciples of the wise increase peace in the world, as it says, “And all your children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children.” Read not “your children” (בְּנִין) but “your builders” (בּוֹנִין).

The antiquity of this particular alternation of words is demonstrated by the appearance of both in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> 54:13.

The remaining examples consist of readings in Shem-Tob containing a word or a phrase similar in appearance to another word or phrase that theoretically could have served as a Hebrew substratum to a Greek synoptic parallel.

Matt 15:17	ἐκβάλλεται
Mark 7:19	ἐκπορεύεται
Shem-Tob	הוֹלֵךְ

Matthew reads “is cast out”; Mark reads “goes out.” Some Markan witnesses read variously ἐκβάλλεται, ἐξέρχεται, or χωρεῖ, but these appear to be secondary. The difference in “cast out” and “goes out” may be explained by Shem-Tob’s הוֹלֵךְ, qal participle of הָלַךְ “to go,” and the similar-appearing הוֹשִׁלְךָ or מוֹשִׁלְךָ, hophal perfect (with *waw* consecutive

<sup>53</sup>Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 12-13; C. C. Torrey, *Our Translated Gospels* (New York: Harper, 1936) 104.

<sup>54</sup>For the pronoun following the participle see 18:10, 23, etc.

<sup>55</sup>See אֵל תִּקְרִי in *Encyclopedia Talmudica*, ed. Meyer Berlin and Shlomo J. Zevin (Jerusalem: Talmudic Encyclopedia Institute, 1974) 2:258-60; I. L. Seeligmann, “Voraussetzungen der Midraschexegeese,” in *Congress Volume Copenhagen*, SVT 1 (Leiden: Brill 1953) 160; S. Talmon, “Aspects of the Textual Transmission of the Bible in the Light of Qumran Manuscripts,” *Textus* 4 (1964): 125-32 (also published in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*, ed. F. M. Cross and S. Talmon [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975] 256-63).

understood) or hophal participle, both from שָׁלַךְ “to cast.” In LXX ἐκβάλλειν translates שָׁלַךְ in a number of instances: Lev 1:16, 14:40, Deut 29:38, Ecc. 3:6, Isa 2:20, Jer 22:28. In the last instance the hophal שָׁלַכְךָ is rendered by ἐξεβλήθη. Similarly Shem-Tob at times reads שָׁלַךְ where the Greek Matthew employs ἐκβάλλειν: 8:12<sup>ms</sup>, 22:13, 25:30. The theoretical Hebrew variants behind these readings thus may have been:

הוֹלֵךְ Shem-Tob, Mark  
הוֹשִׁלְךָ Matthew.

Matt 18:6	καταποντισθῇ
Mark 9:42	βέβληται
Luke 17:2	ἐρριπται
Shem-Tob	וּיֹטֵל

Matthew reads “sunk”; Mark and Luke read “cast.” Shem-Tob reads יוֹטֵל (hophal imperfect of טָלַל “thrown” in basic agreement with Mark and Luke against Matthew. The Matthean variant καταποντισθῇ possibly goes back to the Hebrew root טָבַל “to dip/sink” which in the hophal imperfect would be יוֹטַבֵּל, a word differing from Shem-Tob’s reading only by the addition of one letter. The theoretical Hebrew variants behind the synoptic readings may be diagrammed as:

וּיֹטֵל Shem-Tob, Mark, Luke  
וּיֹטַבֵּל Matthew.

Matt 8:28	ἐκ τῶν μνημείων
Mark 5:2	ἐκ τῶν μνημείων
Luke 8:27	ἐκ τῆς πόλεως
Shem-Tob	מִהַקְבְּרִים

In the pericope on the Gerasene/Gadarene demoniac(s) Matthew and Mark read “from the tombs” where Luke reads “from the city.” An explanation for the variation is suggested by the reading of Shem-Tob, מִהַקְבְּרִים, which corresponds to the Greek of Matthew. “From the city,” on the other hand, reflects מִהַקְרִיָּה, a word that closely resembles the text of Shem-Tob.

Matt 20:32	ἐφώνησεν αὐτούς
Mark 10:49	φωνήσατε αὐτόν
Luke 18:40	ἀχθῆναι πρὸς αὐτόν
Shem-Tob	וַיִּקְרָא

In the pericope on the healing of the blind man Bartimaeus (named only in Mark) or, in Matthew in the pericope on the healing of two blind men,

Matthew reads “and Jesus having arisen *called them*.” This is supported by Mark’s text: “and Jesus having arisen said *call him*.” Luke, on the other hand, says “and Jesus having arisen commanded him *to be brought to him*.” The difference in the accounts “called” versus “brought” can be traced to the Hebrew root קרא “to call” read by Shem-Tob and the similar root קרב “to bring.”

Matt 21:12	ἐξέβαλεν
Mark 11:15	ἐκβάλλειν
Luke 19:45	ἐκβάλλειν
John 2:14-15	εὗρεν . . . ἐξέβαλεν
Shem-Tob	וימצא

These gospel parallels come from the pericope on cleansing the temple. The three synoptics read “cast out,” Shem-Tob reads “found,” while John reads both “found” and “cast out,” giving the appearance of conflation. The variant forms can be explained on the basis of similar Hebrew words. Several times ἐκβάλλειν in LXX translates the hiphil of מצא: 2 Chron 23:14, 29:5, 16. In Shem-Tob the hiphil of this root frequently occurs where ἐκβάλλειν appears in the Greek text: at 7:4, 5, 22, 9:25, and so forth. Thus the variants may go back to:

וימצא “found”	Shem-Tob, John <sup>a</sup>
ויצא “cast out”	Matt, Mark, Luke, John <sup>b</sup> . <sup>56</sup>

Matt 7:14	οἱ εὐρίσκοντες αὐτήν
Luke 13:24	ισχύσουσιν
Shem-Tob	המצאים אותה

In the saying on the two ways Matthew reads “few are those who *find* it.” Luke reads “many will seek to enter and will not *be strong/prevail/able*.” The primary meaning of the verb ισχύω is “to be strong/to prevail” and only by extension does it come to mean “to be able.” Several times in LXX ισχύω is used to render אמן “to be strong” (cf. Deut 31:6, 7, 23; Josh 10:25; 1 Chron 22:13). One can explain the variation in Matthew and Luke, then, on the basis of different Hebrew substrata, one of which reads the root מצא “to find,” now reflected in Shem-Tob and Greek Matthew, and the other of which reads the similar-appearing root אמן “to be strong,” reflected by ισχύω in Luke.

<sup>a</sup>For the apocopated hiphil form, ויצא, see Gen 15:5; Deut 4:20.

These forms are confused elsewhere in the Bible. In Amos 2:16 LXX<sup>b</sup> reads καὶ ὁ κραταῖος οὐ μὴ εὕρησει τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ “and the strong will not find his heart.” This stands for ואמין לבו “and the strong of heart” in MT. The Greek apparently equals לבו (את) אמן. The reading in ms W, καὶ εὕρησει τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ equals לבו (את) ומצא; that in OC<sup>c</sup>, καὶ εὕρηθη ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ equals לבו וימצא; that in V, καὶ ὁ κραταῖος εὕρησει τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ equals לבו (את) אמן ומצא. These variants reflect visually similar readings in Hebrew and may be diagrammed as:

ומצא (את)  
לבו  
וואמין<sup>57</sup>

Matt 25:24	θερίζων ὅπου οὐκ ἔσπειρας
Luke 19:21	θερίζεις ὃ οὐκ ἔσπερας
Shem-Tob	ותקצור אשר לא זרעת

In the parable of the talents Matthew reads “reaping *where* (ὅπου) you did not sow.” Luke reads “you reap *what* (ὃ) you did not sow.” The difference in these passages may be explained by Shem-Tob’s אשר which can mean “which/what” or in the form of באשר or שם . . . אשר can mean “where.”

Matt 7:11	δόματα ἀγαθὰ . . . ἀγαθὰ
Luke 11:13	δόματα ἀγαθὰ . . . πνεῦμα ἁγίον
Shem-Tob	מתנות טובות . . . רוחו הטוב

The Greek text of Matthew reads “If, therefore, you being evil know how to give *good gifts* (δόματα ἀγαθὰ) to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give *good things* (ἀγαθὰ) to those who ask him.” Luke and Shem-Tob read basically the same except in the second

<sup>57</sup>The variants in Matt 7:14 and Luke 13:24 may also be explained on the basis of the Aramaic root שכח which means both “to find” and “to be able.” It has been argued that this root means “to find” but not “to be able” in Palestinian Aramaic. See Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 133-34. The word, however, has now been found with the meaning “to be able” in Palestinian Aramaic, i.e., in 1QapGen 21, 13, and is noted by Fitzmyer and Harrington in their collection of Palestinian Aramaic texts. See Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Daniel J. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978) 339. For a discussion and bibliography see J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1. A Commentary*, 2nd ed. (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1971) 150.

position Luke (according to the majority reading) has “Holy Spirit” and Shem-Tob has “his good spirit.” At this point several variants occur in Luke. The Western text, represented by D it, reads “good gift” (ἀγαθὸν δόμα) followed by Θ’s plural (δόματα ἀγαθά). P<sup>45</sup> L<sup>pc</sup> aur vg read “good spirit” (πνεῦμα ἀγαθόν) and Sy<sup>s</sup> arm read “good things” (= ἀγαθά). Two basic forms appear to be represented: (1) δόμα(τα) ἀγαθόν(-ά) (ἀγαθά being an abbreviation of this); and (2) πνεῦμα ἀγαθόν (πνεῦμα ἄγιον being a secondary modification into more common terminology). These forms may be explained by variant Hebrew phrases, one represented by Shem-Tob, the other by a misreading of the phrase, thus: Shem-Tob = רוחו הטוב and the misreading = מתן הטוב. מתן הטוב, itself an incorrect grammatical form (not unusual in Shem-Tob),<sup>58</sup> may have occurred by a compression of *resh* and *waw* in the Herodian script and a confusion of *heth/tav* and *waw/final-nun*. In the Herodian script when *resh* is immediately joined by the short stroke of the *waw* the result is remarkably similar in appearance to *mem*.<sup>59</sup> *Heth/tav* and *waw/final-nun* are naturally close in appearance and require no special explanation for their confusion.

### Other Interesting Readings in Shem-Tob’s Matthew

For a conclusion to this profile of Shem-Tob’s text of Matthew there is appended here a number of other interesting readings. These, contrasted with the Greek, will give further indication of the differences that exist between the two text forms.

3:11	Greek Shem-Tob	He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He will baptize you with the <i>fire of the Holy Spirit</i> .
8:20	Greek  Shem-Tob	And Jesus said to him: Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. Jesus answered him: the foxes have holes and the birds have nests; but the Son of Man, <i>the Son of the virgin</i> , has no place to enter his head.

<sup>58</sup>Cf. 7:18 הטוב ועץ הדור; 12:41 זה הדור; 13:38 ופרי הטוב; 15:15 זאת החדה.

<sup>59</sup>See F. M. Cross, Jr., “The Development of Jewish Scripts,” in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East*, ed. G. E. Wright (Garden City NY: Doubleday, 1961). On pp. 138-39 several examples of Herodian script are presented.

13:23	Shem-Tob	[At the end of the parable of the sower the following plus reading appears.] As for the hundred, this is the one purified of heart and sanctified of body. As for the sixty, this is the one separated from women. As for the thirty, this is the one sanctified in matrimony, in body, and in heart.
19:12	Greek  Shem-Tob	For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Because there are eunuchs from their birth; <i>these are those who have not sinned</i> . There are eunuchs made by man and there are self-made eunuchs <i>who subdue their desire</i> for the sake of the kingdom of heaven; <i>these are those who enter into great prominence</i> .
23:33	Greek Shem-Tob	You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to Gehenna? Serpents, seed of vipers, how will you escape the judgment of Gehenna <i>if you do not turn in repentance?</i>
24:40	Greek  Shem-Tob	Then two men will be in the field; one is taken and one is left. Then if there shall be two ploughing in a field, <i>one righteous and the other evil</i> , the one will be taken and the other left.
24:41	Shem-Tob	[At the end of this verse the following plus reading appears.] This is because the angels at the end of the world will remove the stumbling blocks from the world and will separate the good from the evil.
25:13	Greek [Mss]  Shem-Tob	Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man comes. Be careful, therefore, because you do not know the day or the hour when the <i>bridegroom</i> will come.
26:23	Greek  Shem-Tob	He answered, “He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me, will betray me.” He answered them: “He who dips his hand with me in the dish will sell me.” All of them were eating from one dish. Therefore, they did not recognize him; because if they had recognized him they would have destroyed him.

# Summary and Conclusion

A remarkable Hebrew text of the Gospel of Matthew appears in the fourteenth-century Jewish polemical treatise entitled *Even Bohan*, authored by Shem-Tob ben-Isaac ben-Shaprut. An investigation into this text leads to the conclusion that an old substratum to the Hebrew Matthew in Shem-Tob is a prior composition, not a translation. The old substratum, however, has been exposed to a series of revisions so that the present text of Shem-Tob represents the original only in an impure form. A pre-fourteenth-century date for the old substratum is established by its unique textual links with a number of earlier anti-Christian quotations of Matthew in Hebrew. An interesting scenario emerges when these quotations are arranged in chronological sequence and followed by the corresponding readings from Shem-Tob and du Tillet. When these texts are so arranged it becomes clear that a gradual evolution in the Hebrew tradition has taken place beginning with the earliest quotations, running through Shem-Tob's Matthew, and ending with du Tillet. The evolution involves two kinds of changes: (1) stylistic modification consisting primarily of improvements in grammar and the substitution of synonymous words and phrases; and (2) revisions designed to bring the Hebrew into closer harmony with the Greek and Latin texts. A conjecture for these latter revisions is that they were for the purpose of establishing a common textual base for discussion and debate between Jews and Christians in the Middle Ages. Two of Shem-Tob's comments on the text also imply he is transcribing an already existing Hebrew Matthew for his polemical treatise, not creating a fresh translation.

Finally, the compositional nature of the old substratum to Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is supported by a literary profile of the text. It is replete with literary devices characteristic of composition, such as puns, word connections, and alliteration, and with passages that reflect variant Hebrew substrata to the Greek or that give a Hebrew basis for synoptic variation. The text also is written in a kind of Hebrew one would expect for a document composed in the first century but preserved in late rabbinic manuscripts. It is basically composed in biblical Hebrew with a healthy



mixture of Mishnaic Hebrew and later rabbinic vocabulary and idiom. In this respect it is analogous to the Masada Scroll of Ben Sira when compared to the late fragments of this same document from the Cairo Geniza. Ben Sira was clearly written in biblical Hebrew, influenced by Mishnaic Hebrew and contemporary Aramaic. The medieval fragments from the Cairo Geniza, like the late manuscripts of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew, show numerous changes due to the corrections of medieval scribes designed to bring the text into a more contemporary form in regard to spelling, vocabulary, and other linguistic phenomena.

Once the revisionary nature of the present text of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is recognized one is able to recapture much of the old unrevised substratum by comparing the manuscripts of Shem-Tob with each other and with the Greek and Latin texts of Matthew. Those Hebrew readings that are farthest from the Greek and Latin and less polished in style should be considered as belonging to the oldest layer of the text. Those that are closest to the Greek and Latin and are polished in style, especially when portraying a later rabbinic hand, should be considered as later revisions.

Other points of interest in regard to Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew are:

1. The Hebrew text of Matthew in the *Even Bohan* is not to be equated with those printed in the later revisions of Münster and du Tillet. Previous neglect of Shem-Tob's text is probably due to its mistaken identity with these other texts. Although the texts of Münster and du Tillet have an occasional link with Shem-Tob they in fact represent late revisions of the Shem-Tob-type text, corrected more or less consistently in order to conform more closely to the medieval Greek and Latin texts of the First Gospel. They are the end result of an evolutionary process of the Hebrew Matthew that began in primitive times and underwent a series of stylistic and textual changes throughout the early and late medieval periods.

2. The relationship between Shem-Tob's Matthew and other textual traditions is difficult to assess due to the fact that Shem-Tob basically represents a unique text type. Nevertheless, some affinity exists between Shem-Tob, the Old Latin, the Old Syriac, and the Diatessaron of Tatian. Of considerable interest is Shem-Tob's several readings that agree with the Coptic Gospel of Thomas.

3. The evidence for a relationship between Shem-Tob's Matthew and the Hebrew gospels referred to by early Gentile Christian writers is almost totally negative. With a few minor exceptions none of the quotations from the Hebrew gospels quoted in early Gentile Christian literature corre-

sponds to Shem-Tob. It may be concluded with considerable finality that Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is unrelated to the various apocryphal Hebrew gospels alluded to by early Gentile Christians. Shem-Tob's Matthew was preserved by Jews and perhaps by Jewish Christians, but not by Gentile Christians, and was only quoted sporadically by Jewish writers until it reemerged *in toto* in the *Even Bohan*.

If the conclusion to this study is correct, namely, that the old substratum to the Hebrew Matthew found in the *Even Bohan* is an original Hebrew composition, the question of the relationship of this old Hebrew substratum to the canonical Greek text is of great importance. As stated before, three basic possibilities exist: (1) The old substratum to Shem-Tob's text is a translation of the Greek Matthew. The conclusion stated above, in the judgment of this writer, rules out this possibility. (2) The Greek Matthew is a translation of the old Hebrew substratum. This likewise does not appear to be a possibility. Although the two texts are accounts of the same events basically in the same order, careful analysis of their lexical and grammatical correspondences fails to support the Greek as a translation. (3) Both the old Hebrew substratum and the Greek Matthew represent compositions in their own respective languages. This latter appears to be the best explanation of the evidence. It implies that the two texts are two editions in different languages of the same traditional material with neither being a translation of the other.

There is evidence from ancient times that this sometimes occurred. Josephus tells us that his work, *The Jewish War* (75-79 CE), was first written in Aramaic or Hebrew and then translated into Greek (Josephus, *War* 1.3). The evidence suggests, however, that Josephus did not actually translate, in a literal sense, the Semitic original but in fact virtually rewrote the whole account.<sup>1</sup> The Aramaic/Hebrew original apparently served only as a model for the Greek version to follow.

In regard to the Hebrew and Greek Matthew, their similarity in arrangement and wording suggests that one, as in the case with Josephus, served as a model for the other. It might appear from the linguistic and sociological background to early Christianity and the nature of some theological tendencies in Shem-Tob's Matthew that the Hebrew text served as a model for the Greek. The present writer is, in fact, inclined to that po-

<sup>1</sup>See H. St. J. Thackeray, *The Jewish War I-III*, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961) ix-xi.

sition. The relationship of the Greek Matthew, however, to the other two synoptics strongly suggests an interaction among them on a Greek level. This brings forth the synoptic problem with all its complexities, a problem the present study does not propose to address. In view of this, any conclusion in regard to the priority of the Hebrew Matthew vis-à-vis the Greek, or vice versa, must not be hastily drawn. Which one came first will be determined conclusively only after much further study and accumulation of evidence.

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## Part Two

# Analysis and Commentary

Part two is a discussion of the Hebrew Matthew contained in Shem-Tob's *Even Bohan*. It includes a summary of what can be known about the Hebrew/Aramaic Matthean tradition, referred to by Papias and other early Christian writers and alluded to or quoted by early Jewish and anti-Christian authors. It attempts to show that the Hebrew Matthew contained in the *Even Bohan*, or a Matthean tradition similar to it, was known and used by Jewish and Christian writers in the early medieval period. Finally, a literary, textual, and theological profile of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is presented.

# Shem-Tob's Matthew and the Hebrew/ Aramaic-Matthean Tradition

## Papias and Other Early Christian Writers

Papias (ca. 60–130 CE), bishop of Hierapolis, wrote that “Matthew collected the oracles in the Hebrew language, and each interpreted them as best he could” (Ματθαῖος μὲν οὖν Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ τὰ λόγια συνετάξατο, ἡρμήνευσεν δ’ αὐτὰ ὡς ἦν δυνατὸς ἕκαστος).<sup>1</sup>

Since the time of Widmanstadt,<sup>2</sup> it has been commonplace to suppose that by “Hebrew” Papias meant “Aramaic.” This supposition is due *inter alia* to the long-standing belief that Hebrew in the days of Jesus was no longer used as the vernacular in Palestine, but had been replaced by Aramaic. From the end of the

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<sup>1</sup>Eusebius *H.E.* 3.39.16. The text and translation are taken from *The Ecclesiastical History*, 2 vols., ed. and trans. Kirsopp Lake and J. E. L. Oulton, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1926–1932) 1:296–97. Kürzinger’s attempt to prove that Papias was speaking only of Matthew’s style of writing, not the language in which he wrote, is not totally convincing. See Josef Kürzinger, “Das Papiaszeugnis und die Erstgestalt des Matthäusevangeliums,” *BZ* 4 (1960): 19–38; “Irenäus und sein Zeugnis zur Sprache des Matthäusevangeliums,” *NTS* 10 (1963): 108–15; “Die Aussage des Papias von Hierapolis zur literarischen Form des Markusevangeliums,” *BZ* 21 (1977): 245–64; “Papias von Hierapolis: Zu Titel und Art Seines Werkes,” *BZ* 23 (1979): 172–86; *Papias von Hierapolis und die Evangelien des Neuen Testaments* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1983). Kürzinger’s argument, based on the assumption that Papias was using ancient rhetorical terminology, may ascribe more erudition to Papias than he actually had. Eusebius described Papias as a man of “very little intelligence” (Eusebius *H.E.* 3.39.13). It is also possible that Papias was quoting the “Presbyter” in regard to Matthew as he did in regard to Mark. The rhetorical abilities of the Presbyter are totally unknown.

<sup>2</sup>Johann Albert Widmanstadt, *Liber Sacrosancti Evangelii de Jesu Christo Domino & Deo-Nostro . . . characteribus & lingua Syra, Jesu Christo vernacula, Divino ipsius ore consecrata & Joh. Evangelista Hebraica dicta, Scriptorio Prelo diligenter Expressa* (Wien: M. Cymberrmann, 1555). This reference was taken from Jean Carmignac, “Hebrew Translations of the Lord’s Prayer: A Historical Survey,” in *Biblical and Near Eastern Studies. Essays in Honor of William Sanford LaSor*, ed. Gary A. Tuttle (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1978) 71n.5.

nineteenth century through the twentieth, an Aramaic background to the Gospel tradition has been investigated and supported, notably by Wellhausen, Dalman, Burney, Torrey, Montgomery, Burrows, Taylor, Black, Zimmermann, Fitzmyer, and others.<sup>3</sup>

Since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, many of which are Hebrew compositions, and the discovery of other Hebrew documents from the Judean Desert, it is now confirmed that Hebrew was used as a written medium in first century Palestine. Hebrew, and even Greek,<sup>4</sup> were also spoken in first century Palestine. Whether Hebrew was spoken with the same widespread proficiency as Aramaic is debated.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Julius Wellhausen, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1905; 2d ed. used here, 1911). Gustaf Dalman, *The Words of Jesus*, trans. D. M. Kay (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902; I have had access to a 1909 ed.). C. F. Burney, *The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1922); see also Burney, *The Poetry of Our Lord* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1925). C. C. Torrey, "The Translations Made from the Original Aramaic Gospels," in *Studies in the History of Religions Presented to Crawford Howell Toy*, ed. D. G. Lyon and G. F. Moore (New York: Macmillan, 1912) 269-317; *The Composition and Date of the Acts* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1916); "Fact and Fancy in the Theories Concerning Acts," *AJT* 23 (1919): 61-86, 189-212; "The Aramaic Origin of the Gospel of John," *HTR* 16 (1923): 305-44; *The Four Gospels: A New Translation* (New York: Harper, 1933); *Our Translated Gospels: Some of the Evidence* (New York: Harper, 1936); "The Aramaic of the Gospels," *JBL* 61 (1942): 71-85; *Documents of the Primitive Church* (New York: Harper, 1941). James Montgomery, *The Origin of the Gospel according to St. John* (Philadelphia: Winston, 1923); "Torrey's Aramaic Gospels," *JBL* 53 (1934): 79-99. Millar Burrows, "The Original Language of the Gospel of John," *JBL* 49 (1930): 95-139; "Principles for Testing the Translation Hypothesis in the Gospels," *JBL* 53 (1934): 13-30. W. R. Taylor, "Aramaic Gospels—Source and Form Criticism," *ExpTim* 49 (1934-38): 55-59. Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 3d ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967). Frank Zimmermann, *The Aramaic Origin of the Four Gospels* (New York: Ktav, 1979). Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* (Missoula MT: Scholars Press, 1974); *A Wandering Aramean. Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula MT: Scholars Press, 1979); Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Daniel J. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978).

<sup>4</sup>J. M. Sevenster, *Do You Know Greek?* (Leiden: Brill, 1968); George Howard and J. C. Shelton, "The Bar-Kokhba Letters and Palestinian Greek," *IEJ* 23 (1973): 101-2. With regard to the Greek background to the Gospels, Morton Smith remarked: "Therefore the movement was not from Aramaic to Greek, but both languages were represented in both the primitive and the secondary stages of the religious developments." See Morton Smith, "Aramaic Studies and the Study of the New Testament," *JBL* 26 (1958): 309.

<sup>5</sup>For a discussion see Fitzmyer, "The Languages of Palestine in the First Century A.D.," in *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays*, 29-56. J. A. Lund, "The Language of Jesus," *Mishkan* 17-18 (1992-93): 139-55. Randall Buth, "Language Use in

These discoveries have resulted in an increase in the investigation into the Hebrew background to the gospel tradition. Those who have been engaged in the research include Birkeland, Grintz, Emerton, Carmignac, Lapide, Chomsky, Buth, Lund, and others.<sup>6</sup> In light of these investigations, it now may be concluded, with some finality, that there is no a priori reason to assume that Papias meant Aramaic by his reference to "Hebrew."

Whether Papias's "oracles" is a reference to the canonical Matthew or to some other document has been vigorously debated. Kümmel surveyed the issue and concluded that Papias meant the canonical Matthew. He also argued that Papias had never actually seen Matthew in a Semitic language and in fact was wrong about the whole matter. "We must concede," he wrote, "that the report that Mt was written by Matthew 'in the Hebrew language' is utterly false, however it may have arisen."<sup>7</sup>

Whatever the case, the early church writings, after the time of Papias, are replete with references to a Semitic (either Hebrew or Aramaic) Matthew. The following are examples:

Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 3.1.1

Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome and laying the foundations of the Church.<sup>8</sup>

Origen quoted by Eusebius, *H.E.* 6.25.4

As having learnt by tradition concerning the four Gospels, which alone are unquestionable in the Church of God under heaven, that first was

the First Century. Spoken Hebrew in a Trilingual Society in the Time of Jesus," *Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics* 5 (1992): 298-312.

<sup>6</sup>Harris Birkeland, *The Language of Jesus* (Oslo: I. Kommissjon Hos Jacob Dybwad, 1954). J. M. Grintz, "Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language in the Last Days of the Second Temple," *JBL* 79 (1960) 32-47. J. A. Emerton, "Did Jesus Speak Hebrew?" *JTS* 12 (1961): 189-202; "The Problem of Vernacular Hebrew in the First Century A.D. and the Language of Jesus," *JTS* 24 (1973): 1-23. Jean Carmignac, "Studies in the Hebrew Background of the Synoptic Gospels," *ASTI* 7 (1970): 64-93. Pinchas Lapide, "Insights from Qumran into the Language of Jesus," *RevQ* 32 (1975): 483-501. W. Chomsky, "What Was the Jewish Vernacular During the Second Commonwealth?" *JQR* 42 (1951-52): 193-212. Buth, "Language Use in the First Century." Lund, "The Language of Jesus." See further James Barr, "Which Language Did Jesus Speak?—Some Remarks of a Semitist," *BJRL* 53 (1970): 9-29.

<sup>7</sup>W. G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament*, rev. ed., trans. Howard Clark Kee (Nashville: Abingdon, 1975) 49, 120-21.

<sup>8</sup>Translation taken from *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (repr.: Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1985) 1:414.



written that according to Matthew, who was once a tax collector but afterwards an apostle of Jesus Christ, who published it for those who from Judaism came to believe, composed as it was in the Hebrew language.<sup>9</sup>

Eusebius, H.E. 3.24.6

Matthew had first preached to Hebrews, and when he was on the point of going to others he transmitted in writing in his native language the Gospel according to himself, and thus supplied by writing the lack of his own presence to those from whom he was sent.<sup>10</sup>

Other writers refer either to Matthew or to an apocryphal gospel in Hebrew or Aramaic, which they identify or confuse with Matthew. Epiphanius (ca. 315–403 CE), bishop of Salamis, refers to a gospel used by the Ebionites (*Panarion* 30.13.1–30.22.4). Elsewhere he writes that the Ebionites use the Gospel of Matthew and call it “According to the Hebrews,” an appropriate name, he argues, because Matthew issued his gospel in Hebrew with Hebrew letters (Ἑβραϊστὶ καὶ Ἑβραϊκοῖς γράμμασιν, *Panarion* 30.3.7). He also refers to the Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew, reporting that it is preserved in Hebrew letters (*Panarion* 29.9.4) and is “incomplete, corrupt, and mutilated” (*Panarion* 30.13.2).

Epiphanius cites directly from the Ebionite gospel seven times (*Panarion* 30.13.2–3, 30.13.4–5, 30.13.6, 30.13.7–8, 30.14.5, 30.16.5, 30.22.4). Recent studies show that these quotations are not from Matthew, but from a harmonized account of the canonical gospels, based on the Greek text of these gospels.<sup>11</sup> Why Epiphanius believed that Matthew was the author of this gospel or that it was originally issued in Hebrew is unclear.

Jerome makes reference to a Hebrew Matthew and to a Gospel according to the Hebrews, but is unclear whether these are to be considered one and the same document. In *Epist.* 20.5 he writes: “Finally, Matthew, who wrote the Gospel in the Hebrew language, put it in the following way: Osianna barrama, which means ossana in excelsis.” The reference is to Matt 21:9 and the language appears to be Hebrew. In *Epist.* 120.8, he writes: “But in the gospel which is written in Hebrew letters we read that not the curtain of the temple but the upper threshold of the temple, being of marvelous size, fell down.” The reference is to Matt 27:51. In *in Matth.* 12.13, he writes: “In the Gospel which the Nazoraeans and the Ebionites use which we translated recently from Hebrew to Greek and

<sup>9</sup>Translation from LCL edition, 2:75.

<sup>10</sup>Translation from the LCL edition, 1:251.

<sup>11</sup>See Daniel A. Bertrand, “L’évangile des ébionites: une harmonie évangélique antérieure au Diatessaron,” *NTS* 26 (1980): 584–63; George Howard, “The Gospel of the Ebionites,” *ANRW* part 2. 25.5: 4034–53.

which is called the authentic text of Matthew by a good many, it is written that the man with the withered hand is a mason, praying for help with words of this kind: ‘I was a mason earning my living with my hands, I pray you, Jesus, to restore my health lest I must beg shamefully for my food.’” The canonical Matthew has no parallel to this. In *adv. Pelag.* 3.2, he writes: “In the Gospel according to the Hebrews which was written in the Chaldaic and Syriac language but with Hebrew letters, and is used up to the present day by the Nazoraeans, I mean that according to the Apostles, or, as many maintain, according to Matthew.” The quotation that follows has no parallel in the canonical Matthew. His reference here appears to be to an Aramaic document.

There are many similar references in early church literature, but for the most part, they are confusing. The early writers attest to an original Matthew written in a Semitic language, but they are unclear concerning the language, whether it is Hebrew or Aramaic. They are also unclear about the relationship of this gospel with our canonical Matthew, or its relationship with the Gospel according to the Hebrews, the Gospel of the Nazoraeans, the Gospel of the Ebionites, and the Gospel of the Apostles.<sup>12</sup> In fact, since only an infinitesimal amount of this

<sup>12</sup>For a discussion of these documents, see Edgar Hennecke, *The New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. W. Schneemelcher, trans. R. McL. Wilson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1959) 1:118–65. In addition to the bibliography already cited above, see A. S. Barnes, “The Gospel according to the Hebrews,” *JTS* 6 (1905): 356–71; M.-É. Boismard, “Évangile des ébionites et problème synoptique (Mc. I, 2–6 ET Par.),” *RB* 73 (1966): 321–52; Oscar Cullmann, “Ebioniten-evangelium,” *RGG*, 2:298; Jean Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, trans. J. A. Baker (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1964) 55–64; Martin Dibelius, *Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur* (Berlin/Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter, 1926); E. Fabbri, “El bautismo de Jesús en el Evangelio de los Hebreos y en de los Ebionitas,” *RevistT* 6 (1956): 36–55; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “The Qumran Scrolls, The Ebionites, and Their Literature,” *TS* 16 (1955): 335–72 (repr. in Fitzmyer’s *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* [Missoula MT: Scholars Press, 1974] 435–80); Rudolf Handmann, *Das Hebräer-Evangelium. Ein Beitrag zur geschichte und Kritik des hebräischen Matthäus* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1888); Adolf Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1958) 205–209; Harris Hirschberg, “Simon Bariona and the Ebionites,” *JBL* 61 (1942) 171–91; M. R. James, ed., *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924) 8–10; A. F. J. Klijn, “The Question of the Rich Young Man in a Jewish-Christian Gospel,” *NovT* 8 (1966): 149–55; M. J. Lagrange, “L’Évangile selon les Hébreux,” *RB* 31 (1922): 161–81, 321–49; Adolf Hilgenfeld, *Evangeliorum secundum Hebraeos*, etc (Lipsiae: T. O. Weigel, 1866, 1884); Allan Menzies, “Gospel according to the Hebrews,” in *A Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1904) 5:338–43; W. G. Most, “Gospel of the Ebionites,” in *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion*, ed. P. K. Meagher et al. (Washington DC: Corpus Publications, 1979) A-E:215; J. Munck, “Jewish Christianity in Post Apostolic Times,” *NTS* 6

gospel is quoted in direct form, very little can be made of it.

A comparison of the quotations from this (these) gospel(s) with the text of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew reveals little or no relationship between them.

### Du Tillet, Münster, and Allusions to and Quotations from Matthew in Early Jewish and Anti-Christian Writings

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is the earliest complete Hebrew text of the Gospel known. Though preserved in the fourteenth-century treatise *Even Bohan*, the evidence suggests that the Matthean text predates the fourteenth century. Jewish and anti-Christian writings prior to the fourteenth century often quote excerpts from Matthew in Hebrew, often in a Shem-Tob type Matthean form. Four of the most important of these writings are: (1) the Book of Nestor (dating perhaps between the sixth and ninth centuries);<sup>13</sup> (2) the *Milhamot HaShem* by Jacob ben Reuben (1170);<sup>14</sup> (3) *Sepher Joseph Hamekane* by Rabbi Joseph ben Nathan Official (thirteenth century);<sup>15</sup> and (4) the *Nizzahon Vetus* (latter part of the thirteenth

(1959–1960): 103–16; Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* (Utrecht-Antwerp: Spectrum, 1964) 1:113–14; A. Schmidtknecht, *Neue Fragmente zu den judenchristlichen Evangelien*, TU 37 (Leipzig, 1911); "Zum Hebräerevangelium," *ZNW* 35 (1936): 24–44; H. J. Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1949); *Jewish Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969); G. Strecker, *Das Judenchristentum in den Pseudoklementinen*, TU 70 (1958) D:117–36; J. L. Teicher, "The Dead Sea Scrolls—Documents of the Jewish-Christian Sect of Ebionites," *JJS* 2 (1951): 67–99; H. Waitz, "Das Evangelium des Zwölf Apostel," *ZNW* 14 (1913): 48ff.; "Neue Untersuchungen über die sogenannten juden-christlichen Evangelien," *ZNW* 36 (1937): 60–81; L. St. Alban Wells, "Gospels (Apocrypha)," in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings (New York: Scribner's, 1928) 5:347–48; B. F. Westcott, *An Introduction to the Study of the Gospels* (London: Macmillan, 1895) 471–73; Theodor von Zahn, *Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons* (Erlangen: A. Deichert, 1888–1892).

<sup>13</sup>This is according to Pinchas E. Lapide, *Hebrew in the Church*, trans. E. F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1984) 23. The text is printed in J. D. Eisenstein, *אוצר ויכוחים* (Israel, 1969) 310–15. The editor dates it in the ninth century (p. 310).

<sup>14</sup>Judah Rosenthal, *יהודה בן ראובן: מלחמה השם* (Israel, 1963) viii. See also Judah Rosenthal, *הרומם של הבשרה עלי' מדי ליעקב בן ראובן*, *Tarbiz* 32 (1962): 48–66.

<sup>15</sup>Judah Rosenthal, *ספר יוסף המקנה* (Jerusalem, 1970) 17. Ms. Or. #53 of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Rome includes material closely related to the Paris manuscript of *Sepher Joseph Hamekane* and is cited here. See E. E. Urback, "Études sur la littérature polémique au moyen-âge," *REJ* C (1935): 49–77. Judah Rosenthal published the material on the gospels in Ms. Or. Rome # 53 in *בקרה יהודית של הכרית החדשה מן המאה ה"ב* in *Studies in Jewish Bibliography, History, and Literature in Honor of I. Edward Kiev*, ed.

century).<sup>16</sup>

Examples of unique textual links between the quotations from Matthew in these writings and Shem-Tob's text will be given below. But first, something needs to be said about the relationship between Shem-Tob's text and the Hebrew versions of Matthew published by Sebastian Münster and Jean du Tillet.

Münster's version appeared in 1537 under the title *תורה המשיח* (*The Torah of the Messiah*).<sup>17</sup> Published in a folio volume, it was dedicated to King Henry VIII of England. In the letter of dedication, Münster reported that he had received the Hebrew Matthew from the Jews in defective form with many lacunae and had, from necessity, restored what was lacking in the manuscript. His work today is of limited value because he failed to mark the passages he had restored.

Du Tillet's version of Matthew in Hebrew appeared in print in 1555. Accompanied by the Latin translation of Jean Mercier, it was published in Paris by the firm of Martin Le Jeune. The letter of dedication to the cardinal of Lorraine, Charles de Guise, explains that the basis for the text is a manuscript that du Tillet found among the Jews in Italy in 1553. The manuscript now resides in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris catalogued under Hebrew Mss. No. 132.<sup>18</sup>

As early as 1690, Richard Simon mistakenly identified Shem-Tob's Matthew with the versions of Münster and du Tillet.<sup>19</sup> This confusion has persisted since the time of Simon. In 1879, Adolf Herbst issued a new printing of du Tillet's text, accompanied by an introduction and variants from Münster's text in a volume entitled, *Des Schemtob ben Schaphrut hebraeische Übersetzung des Evangeliums Matthaei nach den Drucken des S. Münster und J. du Tillet-Mercier*.<sup>20</sup> The title reveals the author's belief that the texts of Münster and du Tillet are reproductions of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. Herbst also argued that

Charles Berlin (New York: KTAV, 1971) 123–39.

<sup>16</sup>David Berger, *The Jewish-Christian Debate in the High Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1979) 33.

<sup>17</sup>Sebastian Münster, *Evangelium secundum Matthaeum in lingua Hebraica, cum versione latina atque succinctis annotationibus* (Basiliae, 1537).

<sup>18</sup>For more information on this version, including my assessment of it, see George Howard, "The Textual Nature of an Old Hebrew Version of Matthew," *JBL* 105 (1986): 49–63. For an English translation see Hugh J. Schonfield, *An Old Hebrew Text of St. Matthew's Gospel* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1927). The text of this manuscript was republished several years ago by the Hebrew/Aramaic New Testament Research Institute in Hurst, Texas, under the title, *Bisorot Matti. The Good News according to Matthew from an Old Hebrew Manuscript*.

<sup>19</sup>Richard Simon, *Histoire Critique des Versions du Nouveau Testament* (Rotterdam: R. Leers, 1690) 231.

<sup>20</sup>Göttingen: Dieterichsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1879.



the source for the Hebrew version was the Latin Vulgate.<sup>21</sup> His conclusions were not drawn from his own research into the textual nature of the Hebrew, but from earlier scholars whom he cited at length. He excused himself from making an extensive study into the variants because of his lack of materials and opportunity for doing so.<sup>22</sup>

As late as 1967, Herbst's confusion of these texts was followed by Matthew Black who wrote in regard to du Tillet's version: "The author of the Hebrew Matthew was probably a certain Shem-Tob ben Shaprut, a famous Jewish polemical writer who flourished in Spain in the fourteenth century."<sup>23</sup>

The present edition of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew clearly shows that Shem-Tob's text is distinct from Münster and du Tillet. The independent nature of Shem-Tob's text was already proven in 1929 by Alexander Marx in his comparison of these texts in a few passages.<sup>24</sup> An extensive comparison of the texts will now support his previous conclusion. It will also reveal that despite their vast differences in vocabulary and style, some unique or almost unique readings are shared by Shem-Tob, du Tillet, and occasionally Münster. The following is a sampling of these readings:<sup>25</sup>

## Matthew 2:12

Greek	void
Shem-Tob	מַהֲלָאֵךְ by the angel
du Tillet	הַמַּלְאָךְ the angel
Protev. Jacobi	ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀγγέλου by the angel
Geo <sup>B</sup>	ab angelo

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 16.

<sup>22</sup>"Die Quelle der Übersetzung ist, wie schon einige theologische Einleitungen bemerkt haben, die Vulgata. Es ist mir nicht möglich, mich auf eine genauere Durchforschung der Varianten einzulassen, welche die von mir edierte Übersetzung darbietet. Einmal nicht, weil mir die nöthigen Hilfsmittel oder doch die Musse und Gelegenheit sie aufzusuchen und zu benutzen fehlt, sodann nicht, weil eine erschöpfende Behandlung des Gegenstandes zu umfänglich werden würde. Ich beschränke mich daher auf einige wenige Bemerkungen, welche irgend welche Ansprüche nicht machen." Ibid., 16.

<sup>23</sup>Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967) 295. Cf. Robert L. Lindsey, *A Hebrew Translation of the Gospel of Mark* (Jerusalem: Dugith Publishers, n.d.) 67, who identified S. Münster's edition as a version of "Ibn Shaprut's translation."

<sup>24</sup>Marx, "The Polemical Manuscripts in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America," 270-73. Cf. Lapide, *Hebrew in the Church*, 55: "And yet with even the most superficial comparison of the two works the radical differences between their vocabulary, style, and diction would have demonstrated the impossibility of a common origin."

<sup>25</sup>For Münster, I have relied on the apparatus in Herbst's edition of du Tillet.

## Matthew 2:22

Greek	εἰς τὰ μέρη τῆς Γαλιλαίας into the region of Galilee
Shem-Tob	אֶל אֶרֶץ הַגִּלְגַּל unto the <i>land</i> of Gilgal
du Tillet	אֶל אֶרֶץ הַגִּלְגַּל unto the <i>land</i> of Galilee
Münster	אֶל אֶרֶץ גִּלְגַּל unto the <i>land</i> of Galilee

## Matthew 3:11

Greek	αὐτὸς ὑμᾶς βαπτίσει ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρὶ he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire
Shem-Tob	וְהוּא יַסְבִּיל אֶתְכֶם בְּאֵשׁ רוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ he will baptize you with the fire of the Holy Spirit
du Tillet	וְהוּא יַסְבִּיל אֶתְכֶם בְּאֵשׁ רוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ he will baptize you with the fire of the Holy Spirit

## Matthew 6:16

Greek	ἀπέχουσιν τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν they have received their reward
Shem-Tob	כִּי כְבָר קִבְּלוּ שְׂכָרָם they have <i>already</i> received their reward
du Tillet	כִּי כְבָר קִבְּלוּ שְׂכָרָם they have <i>already</i> received their reward

## Matthew 8:21

Greek	ἄτερος δὲ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ another of his disciples
Shem-Tob	וְאַחַד מִתַּלְמִידָיו <i>one</i> of his disciples
Münster/ du Tillet/Joseph/ Ms Or Rome #53	וְאַחַד מִתַּלְמִידָיו <i>one</i> of his disciples

## Matthew 9:2

Greek	θάρσει τέκνον courage child
Shem-Tob	בְּנִי חֲזַק courage my <i>son</i>
du Tillet/Münster	בְּנִי חֲזַק trust my <i>son</i>

## Matthew 10:2-3

Greek	James and John . . . Philip and Bartholomew
Shem-Tob	Philip and Bartholomew . . . James and John
du Tillet/Münster	Philip and Bartholomew . . . James and John

## Matthew 10:5

Greek	καὶ εἰς πόλιν Σαμαρειτῶν μὴ εἰσέλθῃτε and do not enter into the city of the Samaritans
Shem-Tob	וְלֹא תֵּבְרִי הַשְׁמֶרֶתִים אֶל תִּבְּאוּ and do not enter into the <i>cities</i> of the Samaritans

du Tillet/Münster ואל ערי השמרונים לא תבואו  
and do not enter into the *cities* of the Samaritans

Matthew 14:21

Greek	οἱ δὲ ἐσθλόντες ἦσαν ἄνδρες ὥσει πεντακισ-
	χιλίοι those who ate were about 5,000 men
Shem-Tob	יהי מספר האוכלים חמשת אלפים אנשים
	the <i>number</i> of those who ate was 5,000 men
du Tillet/Münster	ומספר האוכלים היה חמשת אלפי איש
	the <i>number</i> of those who ate was 5,000 men

Such agreements can hardly be the result of coincidence. This list, which could be expanded to include many other readings, establishes a genetic textual link between Shem-Tob, du Tillet, and occasionally Münster. The situation suggests that du Tillet and Münster rest on the earlier literary Hebrew tradition reflected by Shem-Tob. But they have undergone extensive modification and revision away from the older base in two ways: (1) stylistic modification, and (2) substantive modification. Stylistic modification consists primarily of improvements in grammar and the substitution of synonymous words and phrases. Substantive modification consists primarily of revision that brings the Hebrew into closer harmony with the Greek and Latin texts.

These changes are best seen when they are placed in a chronological sequence, beginning with the Hebrew quotations from Matthew in early Jewish and anti-Christian writings, followed by Shem-Tob, then by du Tillet. When the texts are so aligned, a gradual evolution in the Hebrew tradition as a whole becomes clear, including both stylistic and substantive changes. Logic suggests that each successive stage in the sequence should produce a text that is stylistically smoother and closer to the Greek and Latin. Though generally true, the stages do not always arrange themselves quite so neatly. The following is a sampling of passages where these modifications can be seen.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup>Some clarification is needed at this point. Not every Hebrew quotation of Matthew found in medieval Jewish writings shows a relationship to the Shem-Tob Matthean tradition. In many instances, the quotations appear to be ad hoc translations of the Greek or Latin texts freshly prepared for the occasion. It is in fact the tendency to translate directly from the Greek or Latin that eventually contaminated the Shem-Tob Matthean tradition when it too was subjected to the influence of the canonical text through the process of revision.

### Textual Evolution in the Hebrew Tradition

Matthew 3:5

Greek (= Vg)	καὶ πᾶσα ἡ περίχωρος τοῦ Ἰορδάνου
	and all the region of the Jordan
Joseph	וממלכות על הירדן
	and the kingdom by the Jordan
Ms Or	וכל הממלכות עד הירדן
Rome #53 <sup>27</sup>	and all the kingdom unto the Jordan
Nizzahon	וכל המלכות עד הירדן
Vetus #160	and all the kingdom unto the Jordan
Shem-Tob	ומכל המלכות סביבות הירדן
	and from all the kingdom around the Jordan
du Tillet	וכל מחוץ הירדן
	and all the region of the Jordan

The textual link running throughout the Hebrew tradition (except for du Tillet) is the reading of "kingdom," הממלכות/ממלכות, in Joseph/Ms Or Rome # 53 and המלכות in Nizzahon Vetus/Shem-Tob. Modification toward the Greek and Latin appears in the reading of וכל or וכלל in Ms Or Rome #53, Nizzahon Vetus, Shem-Tob, and du Tillet, in agreement with πᾶσα. Shem-Tob further reads סביבות in agreement with περίχωρος. Du Tillet, abandoning the unique מלכות/ממלכות and reading the medieval מחוץ (= περίχωρος), converges with the Greek and Latin.

Matthew 4:1

Greek (=Vg)	τότε ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνήχθη εἰς τὴν ἔρημον ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος πειρασθῆναι ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου
	then Jesus was led up into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil
Nestor	ישו היה בורח מן השטן Jesus was fleeing from Satan
ben Reuben	אז נודג אל המדבר ברוח שטן להתנסות
	then he was led into the wilderness by the spirit of Satan to be tempted
Nizzahon	שהובא ישו במדבר וניסוהו השטן
Vetus #162	Jesus was led into the wilderness that Satan might tempt him
Shem-Tob	אז לוקח ישו ברוח הקדוש למדבר להתנסות מהשטן
	then Jesus was taken by the Holy Spirit to the wilderness to be tempted by Satan

<sup>27</sup>See n. 17, above.

du Tillet אז הובא ישו במדבר יהודה על ידי רוח למען ינסה מושטן  
then Jesus was led into the wilderness of Judah  
by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan

An element of continuity in the Hebrew tradition is the reading of "Satan" rather than "devil." This agrees with the parallel in Mark 1:13. Another possible element of continuity is the peculiar reading of בורח ("fleeing") in Nestor and the visually similar ברוח ("by the Spirit") in ben Reuben and Shem-Tob. The difference is a metathesis of letters. The change brings Shem-Tob into harmony with the Greek ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος.

Revision toward the Greek and Latin is further in evidence: א in ben Reuben, Shem-Tob, and du Tillet corresponds to τότε. Each Hebrew text, except Nestor, has a correspondent for ἀντήχη: ניהג, לוקח, and הובא. With the exception of Nestor, the Hebrew tradition corresponds to πειρασθῆναι and εἰς ἔρημον by reading a form of נסה ("to tempt") and מדבר ("wilderness"). Revision occurs gradually. After Nestor, ben Reuben is farthest from the Greek and Latin, lacking "Jesus," and reading "by the spirit of Satan." Nizzahon Vetus is next in distance, lacking "by the Spirit" and reading the active form of "tempted." Shem-Tob and du Tillet are close to the Greek and Latin, although Shem-Tob reads "Holy" against the Greek, and du Tillet reads "Judah" against the Greek. Du Tillet is slightly closer to the canonical version by reading wilderness/Spirit in the same order as the Greek and Latin.

# Matthew 5:17-18a

Greek (=Vg) μὴ νομίσητε ὅτε ἦλθον καταλῦσαι τὸν νόμον ἢ τοὺς προφῆτας οὐκ ἦλθον καταλῦσαι ἀλλὰ πληρῶσαι. ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν  
Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For, truly, I say to you

b. Shabb. 116 אנה לא למיפחה מן אורייחא דמשה אחיחי  
ולא לאוספו על אורייחא דמשה אחיחי  
I am not come to take away from the Law of Moses  
and I am not come to add to the Law of Moses

Nestor אני לא באחי לסחור ולא להחסיר דבר מתורת משה  
והנביאים כי אם באחי להשלים בדברי אמת  
I have not come to cancel or to subtract a word from the  
Law of Moses and the prophets but I have come to fulfil  
the words of truth

Ms Or אל חחשבו שבאחי לעקור התורה והנביאים לא באחי  
Rome #53 כ"א לקיים אמת. אני אומר לכם  
Do not think that I have come to abolish the law  
and the prophets;  
I have not come except to fulfil truth. I say to you  
לא באחי לחסור על תורה משה  
Nizzahon I have not come to diminish the Law of Moses  
Vetus #157 לא באחי לבטל תורה משה ודברי הנביאים אלא להשלים  
Nizzahon I have not come to abolish the Law of Moses or the words  
Vetus #71 of the prophets but to fulfil them  
שלא בא לעקור תורה משה ולא דברי הנביאים  
Nizzahon I have not come to remove the Law of Moses  
Vetus #221 or the words of the prophets  
אל חחשבו שבאחי לדפרי תורה אלא להשלים באמת אני אומר לכם  
Shem-Tob Do not think that I have come to annul the law but to fulfil  
it. Truly I say to you  
אין בכל אלו המאמרים להוסיף דבר על  
Shem-Tob (com- דברי תורה ולא להסר  
ment after 6:1) in all these words not to add a word to the words of the law  
nor to subtract any  
אל חחשבו שבאחי לבטל את התורה או את הנביאים  
du Tillet לא באחי לבטל אלא למלא אמן אני אומר לכם  
Do not think that I have come to abolish the law  
or the prophets;  
I have not come to abolish but to fulfil. Truly I say to you

The Aramaic statement in b. Shabb. 116<sup>b</sup> is among the few New Testament parallels found in the Babylonian Gemara.<sup>28</sup> It appears within an anecdote about a judge, perhaps a Jewish Christian, who quotes the gospel in his decisions. It is doubtful that the quotation is actually from Matt 5:17, since it is said to come at the end of the book. Herford suggested that the saying might come from a logia source in which various sayings of Jesus were collected.<sup>29</sup>

The saying is close enough to Matt 5:17 to suggest some connection to it. There are three major elements of continuity between the Aramaic and the Hebrew tradition. The first is the name Moses, which appears in the Gemara reading, Nestor, and Nizzahon Vetus, but lacking in Ms Or Rome #53, Shem-Tob, and du Tillet.

<sup>28</sup>For a discussion of these, see R. Travers Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash* (Clifton NJ: Reference Book, 1966).

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 151.



The second is the Gemara reading of למיפוחו, "to take away," and the readings of להחסיר in Nestor, לחסור in Nizzahon Vetus #157, and להסר in Shem-Tob's comment, each having the same meaning.

The third is the similarity between the Gemara reading and the allusion to it in Shem-Tob's comment after 6:1. The comment reads that Jesus' intention was "not to add a word to the words of the law nor to subtract any." This differs from Shem-Tob's earlier text, and may reflect his original reading. It was common for scribes to revise citations of the biblical text in ancient documents without revising subsequent comments that repeat the quotation or allude to it.<sup>30</sup> Shem-Tob may originally have written this passage in its Gemara form (though with some variation to it; cf. the different order of words). If this is the case, the earlier reading in his biblical narrative represents a scribal alteration designed to bring the Hebrew into harmony with the Greek and Latin.

Further modification toward the Greek and Latin, evidenced by all the documents except the Gemara reading and Shem-Tob's comment after 6:1, include: (1) "abolish" (לסחור, לעקור, לבטל, להפסד) in agreement with καταλύσας, (2) "prophets" (mss A and D only in Shem-Tob) in agreement with προφήτας, (3) "fulfil" (למלא, להשלים, לקיים) in agreement with πληρῶσαι. A final revisionary element is אמח in Nestor and Ms Or Rome #53, באמח in Shem-Tob's revised text, and אמנן in du Tillet—all in some way corresponding to ἀμην in 5:18.

Of the texts cited, du Tillet is closest to the Greek and Latin, representing the end of the revisionary process.

A significant difference exists between the Greek and Latin, on the one hand, and the Gemara and Shem-Tob's comment, on the other. The canonical version contains a negative and a positive statement. Jesus came (1) *not to abolish* (2) *but to fulfil*. The Gemara and Shem-Tob's comment contain a double negative. Jesus came (1) *neither to subtract* (2) *nor to add*. With the exception of Shem-Tob's comment, the Hebrew tradition reflects an accommodation to the Greek and Latin, though Nestor's "subtract" still makes contact with the Gemara reading.

<sup>30</sup>Examples may be found in mss UF and sometimes L of Philo. See Peter Katz, *Philo's Bible. The Aberrant Text of Bible Quotations in Some Philonic Writings and Its Place in the Textual History of the Greek Bible* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950). George Howard, "The 'Aberrant' Text of Philo's Quotations Reconsidered," *HUCA* 44 (1973): 197-209.

## Matthew 5:39

Greek (not = Vg)	ἀλλ' ὅστις σε βαπτίζει εἰς τὴν δεξιὰν σιαγόνα σου, στρέψον αὐτῷ καὶ τὴν ἄλλην But whoever strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also
Nestor	אם יכך אדם בצד ימין דהר לו אח שמאלך להכות בו If a man should strike you on the right side, permit him to strike your left
ben Reuben	אם יכך אדם על לחיך נסה לו האחרת If a man should strike you on your cheek, turn to him the other
Nizzahon Vetus #232	אם יכך יהודי בלחי נסה לו לחי האחרת If a Jew should strike you on the cheek, turn to him the other cheek
Shem-Tob	אבל המכה בלחיך הימין הכן לו השמאל But whoever strikes your right cheek, provide for him the left
du Tillet	אלא אם יהיה שיכך על הלחי הימנית חסה אליו האחרת But if there shall be one who strikes you on the right cheek turn to him the other

Continuity in the Hebrew tradition is seen in the readings: אם "if" (Nestor, ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, du Tillet), אדם "man" (Nestor, ben Reuben), and שמאלך "left" (Nestor, Shem-Tob).

Elements of revision toward the canonical version are: לחי ("cheek"—ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, Shem-Tob, du Tillet) in agreement with σιαγόνα, נסה ("turn"—ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, du Tillet) in agreement with στρέψον, האחרת ("the other"—ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, du Tillet) in agreement with τὴν ἄλλην, אבל המכה ("but whoever [strikes]"—Shem-Tob) in agreement with ἀλλ' ὅστις, and אלא ("but"—du Tillet) in agreement with ἀλλ'.

## Matthew 8:4

Greek (=Vg)	ὃ προσέταξεν Μωϋσῆς εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς which Moses commanded for a witness to them
Nestor	כאשר ציה ה' אח משה as the LORD commanded Moses
Joseph	כאשר ציה משה בתורתו as Moses commanded in his law
Ms Or	כאשר ציה משה בתורתו
Rome #53	as Moses commanded in his law
Nizzahon	כאשר ציה משה בתורתו
Vetus #166	as Moses commanded in his law

Shem-Tob כאשר צוה משה בתורכם  
 as Moses commanded in your law  
 du Tillet כאשר צוה משה להם לעדות  
 as Moses commanded them for a witness

Continuity in the Hebrew tradition consists of: (1) "as" against ὅ "which" in the Greek; (2) "in his/your law (except for Nestor and du Tillet) instead of "for a witness to them." Du Tillet's להם לעדות is clearly a revision toward the Greek and Latin.

Matthew 12:30, 32

Greek (=Vg) <sup>30</sup>καὶ ὁ μὴ συνάγων μετ' ἐμοῦ σκορπίζει . . .  
<sup>32</sup>καὶ ὅς ἐὰν εἴπῃ λόγον κατὰ  
 τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ  
<sup>30</sup>And he who does not gather with me scatters . . .  
<sup>32</sup>And whoever says a word against  
 the Son of Man will be forgiven  
 Nestor . . . אשר קלל את האב והבן ורוח הקדש . . .  
 המקלל את הבן והתחרס האב יכפר לו  
 Who has cursed the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit  
 . . . he who curses the Son and repents,  
 the Father will make atonement for him  
 ben Reuben <sup>30</sup>ומי שאינו מאסף עמי הוא מפזר  
<sup>32</sup>ומי שילעיג מהבן יכופר עליו  
<sup>30</sup>Whoever does not gather with me scatters  
<sup>32</sup>And whoever mocks the Son will be forgiven for it  
 Joseph (ס) החוטא באב ובבן יש לו מחילה  
 He who sins against the Father and the Son has forgiveness  
 Joseph (מא) החוטא באב יחכפר לו וכן החוטא בבן  
 He who sins against the Father will be forgiven;  
 so also he who sins against the Son  
 Ms Or מי שחטא נגד האב יש לו כפרה אם ישוב בחשובה . . .  
 Rome #53 מי שחטא נגד הבן יש לו מחילה  
 Whoever sins against the Father has forgiveness if he  
 repents. . . Whoever sins against the Son has forgiveness  
 Shem-Tob <sup>30</sup>(מי) שלא יחבר עמי יכפור (בי)  
<sup>32</sup>וכל האומר דבר נגד בן האדם ימחל לו  
<sup>30</sup>Whoever does not join with me denies me  
<sup>32</sup>And everyone who says a word against the Son of Man  
 it will be forgiven him

Shem-Tob (com- הנה האב והבן ימחלו לו אבל הרוח לא ימחל לו  
 ment after 12:37) Behold the Father and the Son will forgive him  
 but the Spirit will not forgive him  
 du Tillet <sup>30</sup>ומי שלא יאסף עמי הוא יפזר  
<sup>32</sup>וכל איש שיאמר דבר על בן אדם יסלח לו  
<sup>30</sup>And whoever does not gather with me scatters  
<sup>32</sup>And every man who says a word against the Son of Man  
 it shall be forgiven him  
 Gospel Whoever blasphemes against the Father will be forgiven,  
 of Thomas 44 and whoever blasphemes against the Son will be forgiven.<sup>31</sup>

Verse 30 is lacking in Nestor, Joseph, and Ms Or Rome #53. Their reading of "Father" in verse 32, reflected by Shem-Tob's comment, shows a continuity running throughout this part of the Hebrew tradition. The reading reflected by Shem-Tob's comment is to be preferred to that in his text for the reason given above.<sup>32</sup> The antiquity of "Father" is suggested by its occurrence in the Coptic Gospel of Thomas.

Another element of continuity in the Hebrew tradition is the unique reading in Shem-Tob of יכפור "denies" and כפר "to make atonement/to forgive" in Nestor, ben Reuben, Joseph (מא) and Ms Or Rome #53. A word connection, or pun, based on the root כפר, may have formed the Hebrew tradition. A possible reconstruction of this tradition is:

He who does not join me denies (יכפור) me  
 He who blasphemes the Father and the Son will be forgiven (יכופר).

A final element of continuity in the Hebrew tradition is the concept of "repentance" mentioned in Nestor and Ms Or Rome #53.

Revision toward the Greek and Latin is found in (1) the absence of "repentance" in all documents other than Nestor and Ms Or Rome #53, (2) the absence of "Father" in ben Reuben, Shem-Tob's text, and du Tillet, and (3) the reading פזר (scatters) in ben Reuben and du Tillet. Again du Tillet is closest to the Greek and Latin.

<sup>31</sup>Translation by Thomas O. Lambdin in *The Nag Hammadi Library*, ed. James M. Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1977) 123.

<sup>32</sup>See on Matt 5:17-18a above and n. 30.

## Matthew 13:57

Greek (=Vg)	οὐκ ἔστιν προφήτης ἄτιμος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πα- τρίδι καὶ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ A prophet is not without honor except in his homeland and in his own house
Mark 6:4	οὐκ ἔστιν προφήτης ἄτιμος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πα- τρίδι αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τοῖς συγγενεῦσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ A prophet is not without honor except in his own homeland and among his own kin and in his own house
Luke 4:24	οὐδεὶς προφήτης δεκτός ἐστιν ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ No prophet is acceptable in his own homeland
Nestor	הנביא אינו מחקלל כי אם במדינתו No prophet is cursed except in his own city/land
Nizzahon	אין נביא בלא כבוד אלא בעירו ובביתו
Vetus #167	No prophet is without honor except in his own city and in his own house
Nizzahon	לא יהיה נביא מבוזה ולא יחרף כי אם
Vetus #207	במדינתו ובקום שמכירו אותו A prophet is neither held in contempt nor abused save in his own city/land and in a place where he is recognized
Shem-Tob	אין נביא שאין לו כבוד כ"א בארצו ועירו וביתו No prophet is without honor except in his own land and in his own city and in his own house
du Tillet	אין נביא בלא כבוד אלא במקום מולדתו ובביתו No prophet is without honor except in the place of his homeland and in his own house
Thomas 31	No prophet is accepted in his own village; no physician heals those who know him

The synoptic gospels reflect a variegated tradition in regard to the locality of a prophet's dishonor: (1) Luke reads: "homeland"; (2) Matthew: "homeland and house"; (3) Mark: "homeland, kin, and house." There is some ambiguity in the word πατρίς, since it can mean either "homeland" or "hometown." Usually, however, the reference is broader than "town" and is best understood as "homeland." A similar ambiguity exists in Nestor's במדינתו, which can mean "in his land" or "in his city." This reading is preserved in Nizzahon Vetus #207 which, however, is only a rough paraphrase of our passage. Elsewhere the Nizzahon Vetus (#167) reads בעירו, clearly meaning "in his city." Shem-Tob reads בארצו ועירו, "in his land and in his city," a doublet, perhaps based on the ambiguity of במדינתו. Du Tillet returns to the concept of "homeland," reading

מולדתו. Thus, a connection runs throughout the Hebrew tradition, oscillating between "homeland," "city," and combinations of them.

One may argue that the earliest form of the tradition was the ambiguous πατρίς (homeland/hometown) or מדינה (land/city) which eventually gave rise to the doublet בארצו ועירו in Shem-Tob. This may not be the case, however, in view of the parallel in the Gospel of Thomas 31 which reads, "No prophet is accepted in his own village; no physician heals those who know him." The reading of "accepted" in Thomas clearly corresponds to Luke. We cannot know the original (Greek or Syriac) that stands in the background of Thomas in order to judge the specificity of the word "village." The next saying in Thomas, 32, however, reads: "Jesus said: A city (πόλις) that is built on a high mountain (and) fortified cannot fall nor can it remain hidden." A catchword connection appears to exist between the two sayings in Thomas based on the idea "village/city." This catchword connection, then, suggests that a very early form of the logion read "city" rather than "homeland."

The above examples show that a Shem-Tob type Matthean text goes back at least to the ninth century (Nestor) and, in one instance, to the fifth (Gemara), being reflected sporadically by early Jewish and antichristian writings.

They also show that Shem-Tob's Hebrew text belongs to a stage in the process of textual evolution that began in early times and culminated in du Tillet in the sixteenth century, or possibly later if our survey should include subsequent Hebrew texts of Matthew. Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew, therefore, should not be viewed as a creation of the fourteenth century. It preserves an already existing Hebrew tradition that had been in the process of evolution for an unknown period of time.

## The Evidence from Shem-Tob's Comments

Shem-Tob's comments, scattered throughout the Hebrew text, confirm that this text is not a creation of the fourteenth century. The comments preserve telltale remarks implying that Shem-Tob had before him a preexisting Hebrew Matthew.

1. The comment following Matt 5:31-42 reads: "It appears here that he makes a new saying. But it is not [new], because the Torah not Terah (הורח לא הורח) [permits one] to leave a woman. But (only) because he has found in her a shameful thing."

Shem-Tob's off-the-cuff remark, *Torah not Terah*, implies that the Hebrew manuscript before him contained a misspelling for Torah, employing Yodh instead of Waw. The similarity of Yodh and Waw often led to such scribal mistakes. Shem-Tob no doubt had seen such errors before and, on occasion,



committed them himself. This time, however, he certainly was not the cause of the error. Otherwise, he would have been in the position of creating the problem and then criticizing the Christian world for the mistake. The manuscript before him was clearly the work of an earlier scribe.

2. The comment after Matt 2:1-12 reads: "[This is] a mistake because it is not thus in our books. Nor is it in Jerome's version." The text in question is the unique reading, "You Bethlehem Judah, Ephrathah (ואתה בית לחם יהודה אפרתה)." It varies from the Greek (καὶ σὺ Βηθλέεμ γῆ Ἰούδα), the Latin Vulgate (*Et tu Bethlehem terra Iuda*), and all other Christian witnesses. It also disagrees with the Masoretic Text of Micah 5:1: "You Bethlehem, Ephrathah (ואתה בית לחם אפרתה)."

The comment implies that Shem-Tob did not create this text by translating from the Latin Vulgate, and that he had before him an already existing Hebrew Matthew containing this unique reading. Otherwise, he would have placed himself in the position of creating the reading simply to criticize its incorrectness.

3. The comment after Matt 11:15 reads: "Jesus testified here concerning him [John] that none had arisen among all those born of women like him. If this is the case, he [John] was greater than Jesus, because he also was born of a woman." The comment reflects the unique Hebrew reading of Matt 11:11, which lacks the qualifying remark concerning John the Baptist: "Yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." The Hebrew differs from the Greek, Latin, and all other Matthean witnesses.<sup>33</sup> Shem-Tob's comment implies that he was using an already existing Hebrew text, which lacked the qualifying words. If he had been translating the Vulgate or the Greek, he would have included them and his comment would have been superfluous.

4. The comment after Matt 21:1-9 (a quotation from Zech 9:9) criticizes the text for its use of ארון, "ass," rather than חמור, "ass," found in the Masoretic Text. If Shem-Tob were responsible for the wording of the Hebrew Matthew, he could have used חמור. It corresponds to the Greek ὄνος as well as ארון. The implication again is that he did not create this Hebrew Matthew, but used an already existing copy of Matthew, employing the word ארון. Otherwise, Shem-Tob would have placed himself in the position of rendering the text by a word he did not like or think appropriate and then criticizing it for not agreeing with the Masoretic Text.

5. The comment after Matt 1:18-25 (a quotation from Isa 7:14) criticizes the Hebrew tenses in 1:23. The verse reads: "Behold the young woman *is conceiving* (הרה) and *will bear* (תלד) a son." Shem-Tob comments: "It is not in Scripture, 'she is conceiving and will bear a son,' expressing the future tense, but, 'she is conceiving and is bearing (יולדת) a son,' expressing the present tense." The

<sup>33</sup>The short form of the text appears in mss 5, 475\*, and 1080\* of the Lukan version of Q (Luke 7:28) and in the Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions* 1.60.1-3. See below.

imperfect תלד, instead of the Masoretic participle ילדה caused Shem-Tob the problem.

The verbs, (ἐν γαστρὶ) ἔξει "will conceive" and τέξεται "will bear", are both future forms. If, Shem-Tob had been the translator and had rendered the first Greek future with a present participle (הרה), there is no reason why he could not have rendered the second future with a present participle (יולדת). The fact that he criticizes the tenses, strongly suggests that the translation is not his.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the above discussion.

(1) Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is not the same as the Hebrew Matthean texts in Münster and du Tillet. There are textual links between these writings which suggest that the latter two evolved from a text base similar to Shem-Tob.

(2) Shem-Tob did not prepare a Hebrew translation of Matthew, rendering the Latin Vulgate or any known copy of the Greek text, for his *Even Bohan*. When compared to the Hebrew and Aramaic quotations of and allusions to Matthew from earlier Jewish and anti-Christian writings, it appears that Shem-Tob's text preserves an earlier Hebrew literary tradition. Shem-Tob's comments, scattered throughout his Matthean text, also suggest that he made use of an already existing Hebrew Matthew. The following profile of Shem-Tob's Matthew will confirm this judgment.

# Shem Tob's Hebrew Matthew: A Literary, Textual, and Theological Profile

In this section, I will present a literary, textual, and theological profile of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. The discussion will include: (1) linguistic characteristics of the Hebrew text, (2) revisions and modifications of the Hebrew text, (3) literary characteristics of the Hebrew text, (4) textual nature of Shem-Tob's Matthew, (5) theological tendencies in Shem-Tob's Matthew, (6) different meanings in Shem-Tob's Matthew, (7) the Divine Name in Shem-Tob's Matthew, and (8) other interesting readings.

## Linguistic Characteristics of the Hebrew Text

It is difficult to assess the language of the text of Matthew in Shem-Tob since it is a Christian writing preserved in a Jewish polemical treatise. The question is, would a Jewish polemist of the fourteenth century translate a Christian

The article by Pinchas E. Lapide ("Der 'Prüfstein' aus Spanien," *Sefarad* 34 [1974]: 227-72) should be consulted. It is a detailed analysis of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. Of particular importance is the discussion (246-49) of "Romanismen" that reflect late revisions. Lapide believes the Hebrew Matthew is a translation of the Latin Vulgate, perhaps partly because he used the Neofiti ms which shows considerable assimilation to the Vulgate in places where other mss do not. (See e.g. 2:1 Vg Magi, Neofiti מאגס Brit Lib ms BCDEFGH void [all reading simply חזים בסכבים]; 3:9 Vg filios Abrahæ, Neofiti זכריאש אברהם, Brit Lib ms ABCDEFG void [all reading simply זכריאש אברהם, BC, זכריאש אברהם, D, זכריאש אברהם, EF, זכריאש אברהם, 6:28 Vg lilia agri, Neofiti לילי, Brit Lib ms גילין BC, גילין, DG, 15:2 Vg traditionem seniorum, Neofiti חקתה הראשונים, Brit Lib ms BCDEFG חקתה הראשונים, AH, חקתה הראשונים, 16:18 Vg tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo, Neofiti אתה אבן ועל זאת האבן אבנה, Brit Lib ms CDEFG אתה אבן ועל זאת האבן אבנה, 24:47 Vg super omnia bona sua, Neofiti על שמי, D, על שמי.) Lapide himself notes many differences between Shem-Tob and the Vulgate. The article fails to note Shem-Tob's relationship to the Old Syriac and the Diatessaron against the Latin tradition, his relationship to the Old Latin against the Vulgate (see below), and his relationship to the Coptic Gospel of Thomas and other early textual forms. It fails to note most of the puns, word connections, and alliterations characteristic of Shem-Tob's Matthew. It has no discussion of the abbreviation/circumlocution for the divine name. In spite of these difficulties, Lapide's study can be read with profit.



document from Greek or Latin and render it into standard biblical Hebrew (BH) with a mixture of Mishnaic Hebrew (MH) and even late medieval vocabulary? If it were a matter of an original Jewish composition in the late Middle Ages, one would expect BH or even archaic BH to play a dominate role, as is the case with most texts written during this time.<sup>2</sup>

But, Shem-Tob's Matthew is a Christian text in Hebrew, appearing in a Jewish polemical treatise designed specifically to point out its errors and the general fallacies of Christianity. Yet the linguistic nature of the gospel text is basically BH with a healthy mixture of MH and later rabbinic vocabulary and idiom.

This situation is analogous to the Masada fragments of Ben Sira<sup>3</sup> when compared to the late fragments of the same document from the Cairo Geniza.<sup>4</sup> Kutscher explains that the original Ben Sira was written primarily in BH without escaping, however, the influence of MH, an occasional parallel to the Dead Sea Scrolls, and contemporary Aramaic. The medieval fragments from the Cairo Geniza, in addition to this, show numerous changes due to the corrections of medieval scribes designed to bring the text into a more contemporary form in regard to spelling, vocabulary, and other linguistic phenomena.<sup>5</sup>

The Hebrew Matthew of Shem-Tob is similar. It has already been demonstrated that readings from this text predate the fourteenth century, in some instances going back to early times. Assuming that the basic text of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is old, we have what one might expect, a writing composed primarily in BH with a mixture of MH elements, but which has undergone scribal modification designed to bring it more into harmony with later linguistic forms. In addition, the text reflects considerable revision designed to make it conform more closely to the standard Greek and Latin texts of the Gospel during the Middle Ages.

Shem-Tob's Matthew, as printed above, does not preserve the original in a pure form. It reflects contamination by Jewish scribes during the Middle Ages. Considerable parts of the original, however, appear to remain, including its unpolished style, ungrammatical constructions, and Aramaized forms. Some of these elements will be demonstrated in the following discussion.

<sup>2</sup>See E. Y. Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language* (Leiden: Brill, 1982) 88.

<sup>3</sup>See Y. Yadin, *The Ben Sira Scroll from Masada* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1965).

<sup>4</sup>These were published in Israel Lévi, *The Hebrew Text of the Book of Ecclesiasticus* (Leiden: Brill, 1904). See also A. A. di Lella, *The Hebrew Text of Sirach* (The Hague, 1966).

<sup>5</sup>Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, 87-93. See also the cautious remarks of Isaac Rabinowitz, "The Qumran Hebrew Original of Ben Sira's Concluding Acrostic on Wisdom," *HUCA* 42 (1971): 173-74.

## The Verb

In regard to the verb, Shem-Tob's text employs a mixture of BH and MH forms. A pronounced difference in BH and MH is the virtual disappearance of the consecutive tenses in MH.<sup>6</sup> In Shem-Tob, the consecutive tense system predominates, with a sprinkling of MH forms. The following is a sampling of both forms in Shem-Tob.

### 1. Consecutive Tense

- 1:24 ויקץ יוסף . . . ויפש
- 2:4 ויקבוץ כל גדיליו ויבקש
- 3:15 ויען ישו ויאמר
- 4:18 וילך ישו . . . וירא
- 8:16 ויהי לעת הערב ויבאו
- 14:12 ויבאו תלמידי יוחנן וישאו
- 19:5 יעזוב איש . . . ודבק באשתו
- 20:24 וישמעו העשרה ויחר בעיניהם

### 2. Non-Consecutive Tense

- 1:21 וחלד בן וחקרא שמו ישוע
- 14:35 שלחו בכל אותו המלכות והביאו לו
- 15:36 ולקח השבעה ככרות וישברם ונתנם
- 15:39 נכנס ישו בספינה ובא לארץ
- 24:7 ויקום גי על גי . . . ויהיו מהומות רבות
- 25:17 הלך קנה ומכר והרזיח חמשה אחרים

Another difference between BH and MH is that BH uses the infinitive with the prepositions כ and כ where MH uses the finite verb with כש. The latter corresponds to כאשר in BH.<sup>7</sup> All forms appear in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew: (1) infinitive plus preposition: 1:20 ובחשבו, 6:6 ברוחפלך, 14:30 ובראותו, 15:29 בעומדו, 17:14 בבואו; (2) כש— 14:14 וכשיצא, 14:19 וכשישבו; (3) כאשר 2:10 ויהי כאשר ראו, 6:2 וכאשר ראו תלמידיו, 14:26 כאשר חששו צדקה.

The infinitive absolute is not used in MH<sup>8</sup>. It may occur in Shem-Tob at 22:24, though the form here is possibly an imperative.

The infinitive construct plus לא, used for prohibition, appears at 23:23: לא לשכוח אוחם. It occurs in late BH and the Dead Sea Scrolls, but rarely in standard

<sup>6</sup>M. H. Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927, 1958) 72. Cf. E. Y. Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll (IQIsa)* (Leiden: Brill, 1974) 41-42.

<sup>7</sup>Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, 165.

<sup>8</sup>Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll*, 41.

BH. Kutscher says it "is all the more interesting since it crops up in the languages spoken in Jerusalem at the time, as we see from Aramaic and Greek inscriptions of Jerusalem (and also in Punic, that is, late Canaanite of North Africa)."<sup>9</sup>

Shem-Tob's text frequently uses the periphrastic construction of הִיהַ + the participle to express continuous or habitual action. This form occurs occasionally in BH<sup>10</sup>. Qimron calls it a Mishnaic and Aramaic construction and reports that it occurs about fifty times in the DSS, primarily in the Temple Scroll.<sup>11</sup> The following is a sampling of the construction in Shem-Tob:

Perfect of הִיהַ + the participle:

3:10 הָיוּ חֹשְׁבִים

7:28 הִיהַ מְדַבֵּר

13:34 הִיהַ דּוֹבֵר

22:11 הִיהַ מְלֻבֵּשׁ

27:30 הָיוּ לֹקָחִים

Imperfect of הִיהַ + the participle:

6:10 יִהְיֶה עֹשֶׂי

12:37 תִּהְיֶה נֹשֵׂא

18:18 מִוֹתֵר יִהְיֶה

24:34 יִהְיוּ עֹשִׂים

Infinitive of הִיהַ + the participle:

14:19 וּבְהִיוֹתוֹ מְבִישׁ

23:8 לִהְיוֹת נִקְרָאִים

Pronouns

For the first person singular אֲנִי is dominant in MH while both אֲנִי and אֲנִי are found in BH.<sup>12</sup> The form אֲנִי is dominant in Shem-Tob with אֲנִי occurring in 18:20. MH always uses the plural אֲנִי, while BH uses אֲנִי (except for the k'tib at Jer 42:6).<sup>13</sup> The short form is used most in Shem-Tob, אֲנִי appearing only occasionally (see 6:12). Of the two forms, דָּם and דָּמָה, the latter is found only in

<sup>9</sup>Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, 99.

<sup>10</sup>E. Kautzsch and A. E. Cowley, eds., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957) 116r; Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. and rev. by T. Muraoka (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1991) 410-12. See also Mark F. Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew in Transition. The Language of the Book of Ezekiel*, JSOTSup 90 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 108-10.

<sup>11</sup>Elisha Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986) 400.01. See also Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, 324-28.

<sup>12</sup>Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, 39.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 39-40.

biblical quotations in MH.<sup>14</sup> Both occur in Shem-Tob: (1) דָּמָה: 2:13, 5:8, 11:7; (2) דָּם: 13:13, 38, 39, 23:23.

The plural demonstrative pronoun אֵלֶּה, standard for BH, becomes אֵלֵּי in MH. Both forms occur in Shem-Tob: (1) אֵלֶּה: 10:2, 5, 15:20, 24:8; (2) אֵלֵּי: 7:24, 28, 23:23.

The possessive is regularly expressed in MH by the combination of שׁ and the preposition ל. In older texts, שׁ is attached to the noun it governs. Later it exists as a separate particle.<sup>15</sup> Though rare, שׁ occurs in Shem-Tob at 10:20, 12:39, 26:17, and 27:15. (Cf. שְׁלֹשׁ 12:27, שְׁלֵךְ 25:25, שְׁלִי 25:27, and שְׁלֵקֶךָ 27:63.)

Vocabulary

The vocabulary in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew<sup>16</sup> comes from various historical levels of the language including BH, MH, and later rabbinic Hebrew.

(1) Typical words occurring in BH and Shem-Tob but not in MH

אֲוִלִי	11:23, 27:64
אֶז	9:1, 6, 14, 37, 10:1, 11:20, 12:13, 14, 22, 44, 45, 13:36, 43
רָק	9:6, 10:28, 11:30
אִמְנָם	25:21, 26:56
אִכְן	8:17, 10:22
בְּעַד	2:8, 5:11, 6:2, 6, 10:18, 11:10
לִמְעַן	5:45
פֶּן	6:1, 8:4, 25, 9:16, 30, 13:15, 29
אֲשֶׁר	8:27, 9:36, 10:4, 11:4, 12:18
כִּי	9:2, 13, 11:18, 26, 12:41
גַּם	8:29

(2) Typical words occurring in MH and Shem-Tob but not in BH

מִיד	21:41
כְּחִיב	22:44
מוֹכֵן	22:8, 25:33
רִבֵּן	23:7
זָדוּב	18:24
מִקָּר	12:10, 19:3
מַעוֹשׁ	14:31, 17:20
כְּרִיחָה	19:7
זֶן	13:25

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 40.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 43-44.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, 46-57.

חרדל	13:31
ממון	13:44
נים	17:3
בשכיל	17:13

(3) Typical words occurring only in later rabbinic writings and Shem-Tob

מאסר	4:12
חמידית	6:11
סבעי	15:17, 16:9-12
הנהגה (=behavior)	16:9-12
שתי וערב (=cross)	16:24
עולמיה	18:18, 25:41
שום דבר	21:3, 24:17, 27:12
סוף דבר	21:37
תנפן	22:18
רשום (= impression)	22:20

### Other Constructions

In some instances, Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew contains constructions that do not correspond to the usual grammar of the language.

One example is the participle followed by its subject. Occasionally, the writer expresses "I say" by, אומר אני, 12:36, 17:12, 18:10, 19:9, 26:21, 29. Similar constructions are: עושה יוחנן "John is doing" 14:2, וכיוצא רוח "when the spirit goes out" 12:43, אוכלים הכלבים "the dogs eat" 15:27, אומרים אלו "these are saying" 21:16, שקוצר אני "I reap" 25:26.

Sometimes, a predicate adjective is used as though it were a demonstrative. Thus: זה הדור = "this generation" 12:41, 24:34. One would expect הדור הזה. Similar expressions are: זה השופט "and this judge" 5:25, זאת החדה "this riddle" 15:15, שזה השקרן "this liar" 27:63.

## Revision and Modification of the Hebrew Text

Instances of revision occur in Shem-Tob's text. A comparison of the manuscript tradition shows that many revisions were designed to bring the Hebrew into harmony with the Greek and Latin texts of the Middle Ages. Thus: 12:39 [ינה] A = Greek and Vg; 21:12 [וימצא] A = Greek and Vg; 24:6 [ינה] G = Greek and Vg; 24:43 [יודע] A = Greek; 27:40 [אפשר] BEF = Greek and Vg.

Other modifications were apparently made to improve the style of the Hebrew. Variant readings less polished in style, especially when differing from the Greek and Latin, should, therefore, be considered the oldest form of the text.

Variant readings more polished in style and in agreement with the Greek and Latin should be considered later revisions.

Other modifications include interpolated explanations of names and places, usually following the word לעו [ב] "in another language," transliterated into Hebrew characters from Greek, Latin, or some other language. The following is a listing of occurrences.

2:11	מירא	9:9	מאשיא
3:7	פארזיא	11:21	פירא ד'סיר או סדומה/בורחואים
4:10	שאסאנאס	12:4	פאן סאגרה
4:13	מאריסמה	12:42	ריונה די אישפריאה
4:21	זבאראו חאבארה	13:25	ברייאנה
4:23	מאונגיליין	16:13	פיליבוס/סוריאה
5:31	ליבי"ל ריפודיין	16:16	קריספ/פייסרוס
6:2	איפוקראטיס	17:1	נאימי
6:28	גיליין	23:5	פיליאוס
6:30	פיין	24:14	אונגילי
8:6	פיראלשויה	26:13	אונגיל
8:28	נארניזאני	27:33	קאלווארי
9:2	פאראלטיקן		

The distribution of these transliterations suggests that the interpolator's interest in his task waned substantially after sixteen chapters. Only five occur after that point. The secondary nature of these readings is proven by the disruption they make in the syntax. The text at 24:14, for example, reads: בשורה לעו אונגילי (literally = "in gospel, that is evangeli, this"). The construction . . . זאת (literally = "in this gospel") is interrupted by לעו and a transliteration of the Greek or Latin for the word "gospel."

Further modification of the Hebrew consists of the substitution of words that were more suitable to the scribe. These modifications sometimes bring the text into closer harmony with the Greek or Latin and sometimes improve the style. Occasionally, they do neither.

The unrevised form of the text can sometimes be determined from Shem-Tob's comments. The comments occasionally repeat a verse or phrase from the biblical narrative in a different form. When this happens, the form of the verse or phrase in the comment is to be preferred to the form in the biblical narrative. As reported above, it was common for medieval scribes to revise a biblical text without revising, in a corresponding way, subsequent comments on the text (see above, pages 168 and 172).

Accordingly, the original of 12:32 read "Father," 16:16 lacked "Messiah," 21:5 read ארון (instead of חומר in mss AEFG), and 26:41 read לבורא.



## Literary Characteristics of the Hebrew Text

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is characterized by literary devices such as puns, word connections, and alliteration. These are numerous—the text is saturated with them, far beyond what appears in the Greek—and belong to the very structure of the Hebrew Text. Although their origin is a mystery, it does not seem probable that Shem-Tob created them in the fourteenth century. Being a polemist, intent on damaging the Christian message, he would hardly have attempted to beautify and enhance the text of Matthew at the same time he refuted it. The text's literary niceties appear to come from the hand of a believer, not a hostile polemist.

### Puns

The sayings of Jesus in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew are often based on puns, or wordplays. Matt 7:6 reads: "do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under foot and turn to attack you." "Swine" *hazir* (חזיר) and "turn" *yah'zor* (יחזיר) are similar in Hebrew, both in sound and appearance, and form a wordplay in the text.

Other examples are:

1. Matt 10:36 "The enemy will be loved ones." "The enemy" *ha'oyvim* (האויבים) and "loved ones" *ahuvim* (אהובים) are similar in sound and appearance.

2. Matt 18:27 "The master had pity on him and forgave him everything." The wordplay is "pity" *hamal* (חמל) and "forgave" *mahal* (מחל).

3. Matt 21:19 "He saw a fig tree near the road and drew near to it but found nothing on it except leaves. He said to it: May fruit never come forth from you." Two wordplays are involved: (1) מצא (*matsa*) "found" and יצא (*yetse*) "come forth" (2) העלים (*ha'alim*) "leaves" and לעולם (*le'olam*) "for ever." A diagram of the puns is:

מצא בה רק העלים  
יצא ממך פרי לעולם

4. Matt 23:27-28 "For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. So you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." The pun involves the root קבר (*qever*) "tomb" and קרב (*qerev*) "within."

5. The most famous pun in the Greek Matthew occurs at 16:18: "You are Peter (Πέτρος) and on this rock (πέτρᾱ) I will build my church."<sup>17</sup>

A different pun occurs in the Hebrew Text. It reads: "You are a *stone*, *even* (אבן), and upon you I will build, *eveneh* (אבנה), my house of prayer." A similar wordplay occurs in Matt 21:42, a quotation of messianic flavor from Ps 118:22: "The very *stone* which the *builders* rejected has become the head of the corner."<sup>18</sup>

### Word Connections

Shem-Tob's text is replete with word connections. These are connections made by the repetition of words or similar words, that give structure to individual sayings and pericopes or that tie separate sayings and pericopes together.

An example is the calling of James and John followed by the pericope on the early preaching of Jesus in Galilee. James and John are said to be the sons of Zebedee. Nothing beyond the mention of *Zebedee* plays a role in the Greek text.

In the Hebrew, this name becomes part of a word connection that ties this pericope to the following pericope. Matt 4:21 reads: "He turned from there and saw two other brothers, James and John, brothers who were sons of Zebedee [זבדיאל]." The name is a combination of זבדי, "gifts," and אל, "God," meaning perhaps "gifts of God." The next pericope reads: "Then Jesus went around the land of Galilee teaching their assemblies and preaching to them the good *gift* [זבד] . . . of the kingdom of heaven" (vs 23). The repetition of זבד *gift* clearly ties the two sections together.

Another example is the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant, Matt 18:23-35. The section is characterized by a repetition of the word "repay," שלם. At the end of the pericope, the Hebrew uses the word שלם again with the meaning of "perfect." It thus ties the whole section together by the catchword connection, שלם . . . שלם. The text reads:

<sup>23</sup>At that time Jesus said to his disciples: the kingdom of heavens is like a certain king who sat to make a reckoning with his servants and ministers.

<sup>24</sup>As he began to reckon, one came who owed about ten thousand pieces of gold.

<sup>17</sup>Because of the wordplay, August Dell argued that this saying originally circulated in Greek and originated not with Jesus but in the Greek-speaking segment of the church. See August Dell, "Matthäus 16, 17-19," *ZNW* 15 (1914): 1-49; "Zur Erklärung von Matthäus 16:17-19," *ZNW* 17 (1916): 27-32. See also Klijn's objections in A. F. J. Klijn, "die Wörter 'Stein' und 'Felsen' in der syrischen Übersetzung des Neuen Testaments," *ZNW* 50 (1959): 99-105.

<sup>18</sup>For more on *stone/build* see n. 108, below.

- <sup>25</sup>But he had nothing to give and his master commanded to sell him and his children and all that was his *to repay* [לשלם] the value.
- <sup>26</sup>The servant fell before his master and implored him to have pity on him and to be patient with him because he would *repay* [שלם] everything.
- <sup>27</sup>Then his master had pity on him and forgave him everything.
- <sup>28</sup>But that servant went out and found one of his comrades who owed him a hundred pieces of money and he grasped him and struck him saying. . .
- <sup>29</sup>Trust me and be patient with me and I will *repay* [שלם] everything.
- <sup>30</sup>But he was not willing to listen to him; so they brought him to the prison until he *repaid* [שלם] him everything.
- <sup>31</sup>The servants of the king saw that which he did and were very angry and went and told their master.
- <sup>32</sup>Then his master called him and said to him: Cursed servant, did I not forgive you all your (debt) when you placated me?
- <sup>33</sup>So why did you not forgive your servant when he supplicated you as I forgave you?
- <sup>34</sup>His master was angry with him and commanded to afflict him until he should *repay* [שלם] him all the debt.
- <sup>35</sup>Thus will my Father who is in heaven do to you if you do not forgive each man his brother with a *perfect* [שלם] heart.

Another example is Matt 10:35-39. The omission of vs 38 in the Hebrew is interesting, since its absence bestows on the text a literary quality it does not otherwise have.

- <sup>35</sup>I have come to separate mankind, the son from his father and the daughter from her mother.
- <sup>36</sup>The *enemy* [והאויבים] is to be *loved* ones [אהובים].
- <sup>37</sup>He who *loves* [אהוב] his father and his mother more than me, I am not suitable for him.
- <sup>38</sup>[void]
- <sup>39</sup>He who *loves* [אהוב] his life will lose it, he who loses (it) for my sake will find it.

These verses come from two separate pericopes: (1) Divisions within Households, 10:34-36, and (2) Conditions of Discipleship, 10:37-39. A pun appears in the Hebrew text of 10:34-36, giving the section literary structure. Verse 36 reads: The *enemy* is to be *loved* ones. "Enemy" and "loved ones" are similar in sound and appearance, being האויבים *ha'oyvim* and אהובים *ahuvim*, respectively.

From this pun, the word "love" (אהב) emerges as a catchword that makes contact with the next pericope, in which it reappears as a major element.

The absence of vs 38 is important for this catchword context, since its occurrence in the Greek text disrupts the connection. It reads: "And he who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me." The Greek form of vs 39 is also disruptive of the catchword context, reading: "He who *finds* his life will lose it." Both of these disruptions are absent in the Hebrew text, allowing the pun/catchword *love* to dominate the entire section.

The Hebrew is clearly more artistic than the Greek, even though its literary structure is based upon a shorter text (the absence of vss 37b-38). The short text (lacking vss 37b-38) is supported, however, by P<sup>19</sup> (=P. Oxy. 1170) a fourth- or fifth-century manuscript in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. Vs 37b is also missing in B\* D 983 and a few others.

The Hebrew wording of vs 39, "He who *loves* his life," is supported by the parallel in John 12:25 which reads: "He who loves [δ φιλῶν] his life."

The Hebrew, therefore, preserves an alternate form of these verses in which the catchword *love* dominates.

The following is a list of similar connections that occur in the Hebrew text of Shem-Tob's Matthew. *In no instance is there a corresponding word connection in the Greek or Latin.* The Hebrew word/root involved in the word connection is placed at the end of each example.

- 5:9-10 <sup>9</sup>Blessed are those who *pursue* [רודפי] peace for they shall be called the sons of God.
- <sup>10</sup>Blessed are those who are *persecuted* [תורדים] for righteousness for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- [רדף = to pursue/to persecute]
- 5:14-15 <sup>14</sup>A city built upon a hill cannot be hidden [לחסות].
- <sup>15</sup>They do not light a lamp to place it in a hidden [נסתר] place.
- [סתר = to hide]
- 8:28,31 <sup>28</sup>There *met him* [ויפגשו בו] two demon-possessed men.
- <sup>31</sup>Then the demons *entreated him* [ויפגעו בו]
- [פגע = to meet/to entreat]
- 12:13,15 <sup>13</sup>Then he said to the man: *stretch out* [נסח] your hand and he *stretched out* [ויסח] his hand and it returned as the other.
- <sup>15</sup>It came to pass after this Jesus knew and *turned aside* [ויסח] from there.
- [נסח = to stretch out/to turn aside]
- 14:35,36 <sup>35</sup>They brought to him all those who were *sick* [חולים] with various kinds of diseases.
- <sup>36</sup>*They implored* [וחלו] him
- [חלה = to be sick/to implore]
- 15:34-37 <sup>34</sup>They answered: *seven* [שבעה] and a few fish.
- <sup>35</sup>So Jesus commanded the people to sit upon the grass.



<sup>36</sup>Then he took the *seven* [השבעה] loaves and broke them and gave them to his disciples and they gave to the people.

<sup>37</sup>All of them ate and were *satisfied* [וישבעו] and from that which was remaining they filled *seven* [השבעה] seahs.  
[שבעה = seven; שבע = to be satisfied]

19:9,13

<sup>9</sup>He who takes her who has been *divorced* [וגרושה] commits adultery.

<sup>13</sup>Then they brought children to him that he might lay his hand on them and pray for them, but his disciples were *driving* [מגרשים] them away.

[גרש = to divorce/to drive away]

21:37-38,46

<sup>37</sup>Finally, he sent them his son saying: perhaps they will *honor* [ירא] my son.

<sup>38</sup>The workers *saw* [ויראו] his son and said to one another; this is the heir. Come, let us kill him and we will inherit his estate.

<sup>46</sup>Then they sought to kill him but they *feared* [ויראו] the crowds to whom he was a prophet.

[ירא = to honor/fear; ראו = to see]

26:28,34-36

<sup>28</sup>This is my blood of the new covenant which will be poured out for many for the *atonement* [לכפרת] of sins.

<sup>34</sup>Jesus said: truly I say to you, this night before the cock-crow you will *deny* [תכפור] me three times.

<sup>35</sup>Peter said to him: if it is possible for me to die with you, I will not *deny* [אכפור] you. . . .

<sup>36</sup>Then Jesus came with them to the *village* [לכפר] of Geshemonim and said: sit now until I go there and pray.

[כפרה = atonement; כפר = to deny/village]

Mention should be made in this context of an occasional midrashic reading in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. I refer specifically to catchword connections between a quotation from the Hebrew Bible and an accompanying discussion, where the catchword involves a change in the biblical text, e.g., the metathesis or substitution of one or more letters or a change in vocalization. These readings

are similar to the *peshar* quotations in the Qumran documents<sup>19</sup> and the *ʿal tiqre* readings in later Rabbinic writings.<sup>20</sup> I append here two examples.

(1) Matt 11:8, 10

Vs 8 Behold those who wear noble garments are in the houses of *kings* [המלכים]. . . .

Vs 10 This is he about whom it is written: behold I am sending *my messenger* [מלאכי].

The logion, evoked by the query of John's disciples, includes the word connection based on the similarity of המלכים "kings" and מלאכי "my messenger." The quotation of vs 10 is from Mal 3:1.

(2) Matt 18:16

If by every oath he does not listen to you add *still* [עוד] one or two, in order that your words might be before two or three witnesses [עדים], because by two or three *witnesses* [עדים] a word will be established.

The context pertains to the reproof of a brother. The biblical allusion: "by two or three witnesses a word will be established," comes from Deut 19:15 (not exact to the Masoretic Text). The connection between the biblical allusion and its application in the Matthean text is based upon the similarity of עוד (still) and עד (witness; pl. עדים), the difference being only one of vocalization.

<sup>19</sup>See Maurya P. Horgan, *Pesharim: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books*, CBQMS 8 (Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1979) 244-47; J. A. Fitzmyer, "The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and in the New Testament," *NTS* 7 (1960-61): 297-333; F. F. Bruce, *Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts* (London: Tyndale Press, 1959); M. P. Miller, "Targum, Midrash and the Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament," *JSJ* 2 (1971): 29-83; D. M. Smith, Jr., "The Use of the Old Testament in the New," in *The Use of the Old Testament in the New and Other Essays: Studies in Honor of William Franklin Stinespring*, J. M. Efrid, ed. (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1972) 3-65.

Horgan outlines the techniques used in the *peshar* quotations: "the use of synonyms for words in the lemma; use of the same roots as in the lemma, appearing in the same or different grammatical forms; play on words in the lemma; changing the order of letters or words in the lemma; use of a different textual tradition; and referring back to an earlier lemma or anticipating a following lemma. *Ibid.*, 245.

<sup>20</sup>See אל תקרי in *Encyclopedia Talmudica*, ed. Meyer Berlin and Shlomo J. Zevin (Jerusalem: Talmudic Encyclopedia Institute, 1974) 2:258-60; I. L. Seeligmann, "Voraussetzungen der Midraschexegese," in *Congress Volume Copenhagen*, SVTP 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1953) 160; S. Talmon, "Aspects of the Textual Transmission of the Bible in the Light of Qumran Manuscripts," *Textus* 4 (1964) 125-32.

## Alliteration

In the following passages, alliteration of various kind occurs. The relevant words in Hebrew will be placed in parentheses and transliterated.

- 4:12 It came to pass in those days Jesus heard that John *had been delivered up* [במסר, *nimsar*] *into prison* [במאסר, *b'ma'asar*].
- 4:21 He turned from there and saw two *other brothers* [אחים אחרים, *ahim aherim*].
- 5:23 If you should *offer your gift* [תקריב קרבןך, *taqriv qarbankha*] at the altar and remember that you have a quarrel with *your companion* [חברך, *h'verkha*].<sup>21</sup>
- 9:8 The crowds *saw* [ויראו, *vayir'u*] and *feared* [ויראו, *vayir'u*].<sup>22</sup>
- 11:6 Blessed is the one who [ואשרי אִשֶּׁר, *ašre'asher*].
- 11:29 Take my *yoke upon you* [עליכם, *uli alekhem*] and learn of me and know that *I am meek* [עני אני, *ani-ni*].
- 12:15 Many *sick* [חולים, *holim*] followed him and he healed *all of them* [כולם, *kulam*].
- 14:32 When they went up into a boat *the wind settled down* [נח הרוח, *nah haruah*].
- 18:9 If your eye causes you to *stumble* [תכשילך, *takšilekha*] . . . *cast* [תשליכה, *tašlikheha*] it from you.

Textual Nature of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew<sup>23</sup>

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is the most unusual text of the First Gospel extant. It contains a plethora of readings which are not to be found in any of the Christian codices of the Greek Gospel. Its unusual nature may be explained by the fact that it underwent a different process of transmission than the Greek, since it was preserved by Jews, independent from the Christian community.

A textual profile of Shem-Tob's Matthew reveals that it sporadically agrees with early witnesses, both Christian and non-Christian. Sometimes it agrees with readings and documents that vanished in antiquity only to reappear in recent

<sup>21</sup>See also 8:4. Cf. Jean Carmignac, "Studies in the Hebrew Background of the Synoptic Gospels," *ASTI* 7 (1970): 72.

<sup>22</sup>Carmignac anticipated this wordplay. *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup>See George Howard, "The Textual Nature of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew," *JBL* 108 (1989): 239-57.

times. The profile thus suggests that a Shem-Tob type text of Matthew was known in the early Christian centuries.<sup>24</sup>

I. Shem-Tob and Codex Sinaiticus<sup>25</sup>

I have isolated five readings in Shem-Tob's Matthew that are found elsewhere only in Codex Sinaiticus (= Codex 01). An additional four are found in Codex Sinaiticus plus one or more of the Egyptian versions and a few minor witnesses. I list them here, using NA<sup>27</sup> as a basis for the collation.

## Codex 01 and Heb Matt

- 7:27 καὶ ἔπνευσαν οἱ ἀνεμοὶ omit 01\* Heb Matt
- 13:44 ἐν τῷ ἀγρῷ omit 01\* Heb Matt
- 21:17 ἔξω τῆς πόλεως omit 01\* Heb Matt<sup>26</sup>
- 23:4 φορτία + μεγάλα 01; + גדולות Heb Matt

<sup>24</sup>The following editions and apparatuses have been used in the profile: Constantinus Tischendorf, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, vol. 1, 8th ed. (Leipzig: Giesecke & Devrient, 1869); Kurt Aland, *Synopsis Quatuor Evangeliorum*, 9th ed. (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibleanstalt, 1976); Albert Huck and Heinrich Greeven, *Synopsis of the First Three Gospels*, 13th ed. (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1981); S. C. E. Legg, *Novum Testamentum Graece: Evangelium Secundum Marcum*, and *Evangelium Secundum Matthaeum* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1935, 1940); *The New Testament in Greek. The Gospel according to St. Luke*, ed. by the American and British Committees of the International Greek New Testament Project (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984-1987). For the Old Syriac I have used F. C. Burkitt, *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe* (Cambridge: University Press, 1904) and Agnes Smith Lewis, *The Old Syriac Gospels or Evangelion da-Mepharreshe* (London, 1910). For Tatianic readings, I have used, in addition to the critical apparatuses listed above, Louis Leloir, *Saint Ephrem: Commentaire de l'Evangile Concordant: Texte Syriaque (Manuscript Chester Beatty 709)* (Dublin: Hodges Figgis, 1963); *Saint Ephrem, Commentaire de l'Evangile Concordant, Version Arménienne*, CSCO 137, *Scriptores Armeniaci I* (Louvain: Louvain University Press, 1953); Latin trans. 145, *Scriptores Armeniaci 2* (Louvain: Louvain University Press, 1964); Ignatius Ortiz de Urbina, *Vetus Evangelium Syrorum, et exinde excerptum Diatessaron Tatiani*, *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensis* series VI (Madrid, 1967). For the Old Latin I have used Adolf Jülicher, *Italia: Das Neue Testament in Altlateinischer Überlieferung*, rev. by Walter Matzkow and Kurt Aland (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter): vol. 1, *Matthäus-Evangelium* (1972); vol. 2, *Marcus-Evangelium* (1970); vol. 3, *Lucas-Evangelium* (1976).

<sup>25</sup>See George Howard, "A Note on Codex Sinaiticus and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew," *NovT* 34 (1992): 46-47.

<sup>26</sup>Legg mistakenly notes ms 28 as omitting these words. Ms 28 is an eleventh-century gospel manuscript which breaks off at Matt 16:10 and does not pick up again until 26:70.







Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is a source for an even shorter ending to Matthew than the Eusebian form. Matt 28:19-20 in the Hebrew text reads:

- (19) Go  
 (20) and teach them to carry out all the things which I have commanded you forever  
 (19) לכו אחם  
 (20) ולמדו אותם לקיים כל הדברים אשר ציוחתי אחכם עד עולם

This reading lacks the trinitarian baptismal formula, in agreement with the short Eusebian form, and, also lacks reference to "the Gentiles," which is found in the majority Greek text.

Although the writings of Eusebius were preserved throughout the Middle Ages, this father's witness to the short form of the ending of Matthew was not influential. No one seems to have noticed it until the beginning of the twentieth century. If the short ending of the Gospel in Shem-Tob's Matthew is related to the short ending in Eusebius, no direct link between them is probable. Their relationship points to a time considerably earlier than the fourteenth century, possibly as early as the fourth century.

### III. Shem-Tob, the Old Syriac, and the Old Latin

There are numerous agreements between Shem-Tob, the Old Syriac, and the Old Latin. Sometimes these texts are accompanied by other witnesses, usually considered as belonging to the "Western" tradition.

#### *Shem-Tob and the Old Syriac*

The following is a sampling of instances where Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew agrees with the Old Syriac, either Sy<sup>s</sup> and/or Sy<sup>c</sup> (occasionally accompanied by the Peshitta, Sy<sup>p</sup>) against all other Matthean witnesses.

- 2:19 + "king" Sy<sup>s,c,p</sup> Heb Matt  
 3:11 + "behold" Sy<sup>c</sup> Heb Matt  
 4:18 + "shore" Sy<sup>s</sup> Heb Matt  
 5:12 "who were before you" omit: Sy<sup>s</sup> Heb Matt  
 8:9 "I have authority" Sy<sup>s,c</sup> Heb Matt  
 10:6 "strayed" Sy<sup>s,p</sup> Heb Matt  
 12:5 "on the sabbath" omit: Sy<sup>c,p</sup> Heb Matt  
 12:31 "sons of men" Sy<sup>s,c,p</sup> Heb Matt  
 14:26 "demon" Sy<sup>s,c</sup> Heb Matt  
 15:2 "ordinances" Sy<sup>s,c</sup> Heb Matt  
 15:3 "ordinances" Sy<sup>s,c</sup> Heb Matt  
 16:17 "and having answered" omit: sy<sup>c</sup> Heb Matt  
 22:35 "scribe" Sy<sup>c</sup> Heb Matt  
 26:10 "good and wonderful deed" Sy<sup>s</sup> Heb Matt

#### *Shem-Tob and the Old Latin*

The following is a sampling of readings where Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew agrees with the Old Latin (=OL), occasionally accompanied by the Vulgate (=Vg) or Codex Bezae against all other Matthean witnesses.

- 1:12 "and after the Babylonian Exile" omit k Heb Matt  
 8:30 "not far" a b c f ff<sup>1</sup> g<sup>1</sup> h l Vg; "near by" Heb Matt  
 9:11 "sit" k Heb Matt  
 9:35 "towers" OL Vg Heb Matt  
 10:39 "love" ff<sup>1</sup> Heb Matt  
 15:36 "people" a aur b c ff<sup>2</sup> g<sup>1</sup> q Vg Heb Matt  
 16:4 "and adulterous" omit: OL D Heb Matt  
 16:21 "and scribes" omit: a r<sup>2</sup> Heb Matt  
 16:25 "for eternal life" g<sup>2</sup>; "for the life of the world to come" Heb Matt  
 17:21 + "demon" [[a]] b c n Heb Matt  
 18:9 "of fire" omit: d D 1675 Heb Matt  
 25:28 "five" d D Heb Matt

#### *Shem-Tob, the Old Syriac, and the Old Latin*

In addition to the above, Shem-Tob sometimes agrees with a combination of witnesses to the Old Syriac and the Old Latin, sometimes accompanied by Codex Bezae and an assortment of other witnesses. The following is a sampling:

- 4:22 "nets" 126 Sy<sup>c</sup> OL<sup>ms</sup> Vg Cop<sup>sa</sup> Heb Matt  
 5:47 omit whole verse Sy<sup>s</sup> k Heb Matt  
 8:2 "certain (leper)" Sy<sup>c,p</sup> OL<sup>ms</sup> Vg<sup>(4ms)</sup> Hil Heb Matt  
 9:22 "Jesus" omit  $\aleph^*$  D 1555 OL<sup>ms</sup> Sy<sup>s</sup> Heb Matt  
 11:2 "Jesus" D d min Sy<sup>c</sup> Aeth Heb Matt  
 18:2 "one" D d e Sy<sup>s,c</sup> Arm Heb Matt  
 21:33 "in it" Sy<sup>s,c,p</sup> c h Cop<sup>bo</sup>; "in its midst" Vg<sup>(1ms)</sup> Heb Matt

Shem-Tob may have had contact with some Old Latin manuscripts. He certainly had access to the Latin Vulgate, which sometimes reads with the Old Latin. But it is highly unlikely that he had access to the Old Syriac.

There are only two extant copies of the Old Syriac gospels, both containing lacunae. Sy<sup>c</sup>, the Curetonian Syriac, was discovered by William Cureton and edited by him in 1858.<sup>39</sup> Cureton reports that it was obtained, along with other documents, in 1842 by Archdeacon Tattam, from the Syrian monastery of St.

<sup>39</sup>William Cureton, *Remains of a Very Antient Recension of the Four Gospels in Syriac, Hitherto Unknown in Europe* (London: John Murray, 1858). The definitive edition of the text with introduction and notes is F. Crawford Burkitt, *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: University Press, 1904).

Mary Deipara in the valley of the Natron Lakes. It dates to the middle or later part of the fifth century. Sy<sup>s</sup>, the Sinaitic Syriac, a palimpsest, was discovered by Mrs. Agnes Smith Lewis and her sister, Mrs. Margaret Dunlop Gibson, at St. Catherine's monastery in 1892.<sup>40</sup> It dates to the later part of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century.

The Old Syriac version was eclipsed at the end of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century by the Peshitta Syriac. So complete was its replacement by the Peshitta, only two copies of the gospels have survived, and none of Acts and the Pauline Epistles.

Since the Old Syriac perished in early antiquity, it does not seem likely that Shem-Tob, writing in fourteenth century Spain, had access to it. The many readings shared by Shem-Tob and the Old Syriac, therefore, strongly suggest a relationship, whose roots go back to the early centuries of the Christian era.

#### IV. Shem-Tob and the Other Gospels

A characteristic feature of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is its harmonistic readings. These are readings which agree with one of the other Gospels against the canonical Greek Matthew. As is well known, harmonistic readings appear very early in the Gospel tradition. According to Hort, the "Western" text was the earliest text he could fix chronologically. He described it as replete with harmonization:

But its most dangerous work is 'harmonistic' corruption, that is, the partial or total obliteration of differences in passages otherwise more or less resembling each other. Sometimes the assimilation is between single sentences that happen to have some matter in common, more usually however between parallel passages of greater length, such especially as have in some sense a common origin.<sup>41</sup>

It has been argued that Tatian's Diatessaron, which dates to the latter half of the second century, was a supplier of harmonistic readings for the manuscript tradition of the Gospels. Tatian created his harmony primarily by weaving

<sup>40</sup>Sy<sup>s</sup> was first edited by R. L. Bensly, J. Rendel Harris, and F. C. Burkitt, *The Four Gospels in Syriac transcribed from the Sinaitic Palimpsest* (Cambridge, 1894). The definitive publication came later in Agnes Smith Lewis, *The Old Syriac Gospels or Evangelion da-Mepharreshe . . .* (London, 1910).

<sup>41</sup>B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek: Introduction and Appendix* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1882) 124-25. H. J. Vogels investigated the harmonistic element in Codex Bezae (a major witness to the "Western" text) and found it so harmonistic that he concluded a harmony stood behind it: *Die Harmonistik vom Evangelientext des Codex Cantabrigiensis*, TU 36 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1910).

together the texts of the four canonical Gospels. The language in which he composed his text was Syriac, Greek, or Latin, although the former is probably to be preferred.<sup>42</sup>

The studies of Koester and Bellinzoni have shown that a harmonistic tendency existed even before Tatian wrote his Diatessaron.<sup>43</sup> In 1980, I pointed out a number of harmonistic readings in the Old Syriac Gospels which are unsupported by the Diatessaron and agree with pre-Tatianic authors.<sup>44</sup> From these studies, it may be concluded that harmonization characterized the Gospel tradition from very early times, even before Tatian made his harmony.

In the following paragraphs, I will document Shem-Tob's harmonistic tendency by demonstrating his relationship to the other Gospels.

#### *Shem-Tob and the Gospel of John*<sup>45</sup>

The following list is composed of readings which Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew shares with the Gospel of John, in disagreement with the other Gospels.

1. John 1:27 (pars Matt 3:11; Mark 1:7; Luke 3:16; Acts 13:25) ἄξιός "worthy" = Shem-Tob ראוי Acts
2. John 1:27 υποδήματος "sandal" (sg) = Shem-Tob נעל Acts
3. John 1:32 (cf. 1:33) (pars Matt 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22) ἔμεινεν "remained" = Shem-Tob ושרח<sup>46</sup>
4. John 2:14 (pars Matt 21:12; Mark 11:15; Luke 19:45) εὑρεν "found" = Shem-Tob רמצא

<sup>42</sup>For Syriac, see A. Baumstark, "Das griechische Diatessaronfragment von Dura Europos," *OrChr* 32 (1935): 250; Arthur Vööbus, *Studies in the History of the Gospel Text in Syriac* (Louvain: Durbecq, 1951) 12. For Greek, see Carl H. Kraeling, *A Greek Fragment of Tatian's Diatessaron from Dura* (London: Christophers, 1935) 15-18; Adolf von Harnack, "Tatian's Diatessaron und Marcion's Commentar zum Evangelium bei Ephraem Syrus," *ZKG* 4 (1881): 494-95. For Latin, see F. C. Burkitt, "The Dura Fragment of Tatian," *JTS* 36 (1935): 257-58.

<sup>43</sup>Helmut Köster, *Synoptische Überlieferung bei den apostolischen Vätern* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1957); A. J. Bellinzoni, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Writings of Justin Martyr* (Leiden: Brill, 1967). Cf. Leslie L. Kline, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* (Missoula MT: Scholars Press, 1975).

<sup>44</sup>George Howard, "Harmonistic Readings in the Old Syriac Gospels," *HTR* 73 (1980): 463-71.

<sup>45</sup>See George Howard, "A Note on Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew and the Gospel of John," *JSNT* 47 (1992): 117-26.

<sup>46</sup>The Old Syriac of Matt reads "abode." Mark 8 (W) 33 pc lat bo<sup>s</sup> Aeth read μενον. According to Jerome *In Isaia* XI 2 (PL 24: 145) the Gospel according to the Hebrews reads: "it came to rest upon him" (*requievit super eum*).



5. John 4:46 (pars Matt 8:6; Luke 7:2) ὁ υἱός "son" = Shem-Tob בני
6. John 6:10 (pars Matt 14:21; Mark 6:44; Luke 9:14) τὸν ἀριθμὸν "the number" = Shem-Tob מספר
7. John 6:13 (pars Matt 14:20; Mark 6:43; Luke 9:17) ἐγένισαν "filled" (verb) = Shem-Tob ימלא
8. John 6:42 (pars Matt 13:55-56; Mark 6:3) οἶδαμεν "know" = Shem-Tob ידעם
9. John 12:25 (pars Matt 10:39; 16:2; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; 17:33) ὁ φιλῶν τῆν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ "he who loves his life" = Shem-Tob (10:39) האהב את נפשו
10. John 12:25 ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τούτῳ εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον "in this world for eternal life" → Shem-Tob (16:25) ב"ה ל"ח העה"ב "in this world . . . for the life of the world to come"
11. John 13:16 (pars Matt 10:24; Luke 6:40) μεῖζων "greater" = Shem-Tob גדול
12. John 13:28 (pars Matt 26:23; Mark 14:20; Luke 22:21) τοῦτο δὲ οὐδεὶς ἔγνων "no one knew this" → Shem-Tob לא הכירו "they did not recognize him"
13. John 18:10 (pars Matt 26:51; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:50) ἀπέκοψεν "cut off" = Shem-Tob יכרות
14. John 18:11 (par Matt 26:52) θήκα "sheath" = Shem-Tob נדה
15. John 18:16, 25 (pars Matt 26:69; Mark 14:66; Luke 22:56) ἐλσθήκει / ἔστω "stood/standing" = Shem-Tob עמד
16. John 18:39 (pars Matt 27:15 Mark 15:6 Luke 23:17) ἔστιν δὲ συνήθεια ἡμῶν "we have a custom" → Shem-Tob היה מנהגם "it was their custom"
17. John 18:39 πάσχα "Passover" = Shem-Tob פסח
18. John 19:19 (pars Matt 27:37; Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38) Ναζωραῖος "Nazarene" = Shem-Tob נאורה

Three possibilities for the origin of these readings are: (1) Shem-Tob selected them from the Gospel of John in the fourteenth century and inserted them into his Hebrew Matthew. (2) The author of the Gospel of John borrowed them from a Shem-Tob type Matthean text and inserted them into his gospel. (3) Both the Gospel of John and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew are dependent on a common source which contained them.

I find (1) to be very unlikely. There is no apparent reason for a fourteenth-century Jewish polemist to lift eighteen readings from the Gospel of John and insert them into the text of Matthew. So far as I can tell, he would have derived no polemical value from them. They do not enhance his arguments against Christianity, nor do they present the First Gospel in a more unfavorable light.

Number (3) is possible. The Gospel of John and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew could be dependent on a common source. But, since this source is no longer extant, if it ever existed, there is no possibility to prove it.

This brings us to (2). In my judgment, the readings above, where Shem-Tob's Matthew agrees with the Gospel of John, suggest that the author of the Fourth Gospel knew a Shem-Tob type text of Matthew and used this text when he wrote his gospel.

In a later section, I will argue that the Fourth Evangelist polemized against John the Baptist precisely as he is depicted in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. The author of the Fourth Gospel seems both to have used a Shem-Tob type Matthean text and to have disagreed with it.<sup>47</sup>

#### *Shem-Tob, Mark, and Luke*

There are many more readings in Shem-Tob's Matthew that agree with Mark and Luke than with John. This is partly because Matthew parallels Mark and Luke more often than John. Since there are so many overlaps between the Hebrew Matthew and the Greek texts of these two synoptics, it is impractical to list them without some focus.

First, it should be noted that Shem-Tob's harmonistic readings with Mark and Luke are not evenly distributed. He agrees with Luke much more often than with Mark in the triple tradition. Second, and perhaps even more significant, he agrees with the Q sections of Luke more than two times as often as he does with the non-Q sections. A list of agreements with Q is appended below.

<sup>47</sup>A critical issue in N.T. studies is the relationship between John and the Synoptic Gospels. Until World War II, John was generally believed to have a literary dependence on the Synoptics. See B. W. Bacon, *The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate* (New York: Moffat, Yard & Co., 1910) 366-68. Bacon argued that John quoted Mark and was influenced by Luke, but basically ignored Matthew. See also B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels* (London: Macmillan, 1924): 395-417. Streeter argued for John's dependence on Mark and Luke, but not Matthew. The dependence theory is still held today. C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St John*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978) 24 and passim. Barrett argues that the Fourth Evangelist was dependent certainly on Mark, probably on Luke, and possible on Matthew. In the years that followed, the view of John's dependence on the Synoptics eroded. In 1968, A. M. Hunter announced that John's independence from the Synoptics could almost be said to represent critical orthodoxy. See A. M. Hunter, *According to John* (London: SCM Press, 1968) 24. See also C. H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963); E. R. Goodenough, "John a Primitive Gospel," *JBL* 64 (1945): 145-82; E. Haenchen, "Johanneische Problem," *ZTK* 56 (1959): 19-54. For further discussion, see Howard, "A Note on Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew and the Gospel of John."

His agreements with the Q sections of Luke go beyond simple readings. In one section, the Sermon on the Mount, the Hebrew Matthew shows a structural relationship with the Lucan version of Q. The Greek text of Matt 5-7 is laid out as one long sermon, beginning with the beatitudes and ending with the parable of the house built on a rock. There are no breaks in the text or indications that the verses in these chapters ever circulated in isolation from each other. There is no indication that the sermon was composed from a multiplicity of sources. By contrast, many of these sayings are scattered throughout the various chapters of the Third Gospel and are listed by scholars as belonging to Q.

The situation is different in the Hebrew Matthew. The Sermon on the Mount in the Hebrew text is basically the same as the Greek Matthew, but the verses are frequently interrupted by such words as "Jesus said to his disciples" or "He said to them." There are sixteen of these interruptions in the Hebrew text, leaving the impression that small unites were pieced together to form the Sermon. As it stands, the Hebrew Sermon is choppy and stylistically rough, as though an editor failed to remove the introductory words of his sources. The Greek is much more polished, lacking the disruptive introductory words. It thus gives the impression of being one long sermon.

When the sayings in Luke are placed alongside their parallels in the Hebrew text of Matt 5-7, a pattern emerges. Every time the Hebrew is interrupted by the words "Jesus said to his disciples" or "He said to them," Luke, without exception, jumps to a different place in his Gospel, or has a void. To demonstrate this point, I place here an outline of Matthew's version of the sermon with the introductory formulas supplied from the Hebrew text. Alongside each section I place Luke's parallel or write the word "void" to indicate that Luke has no parallel at this point.

#### Matthew 5-7

##### Introductory Formulas Supplied from Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew

Matthew	Luke
5:2-12	6:20, void, 6:21, void, 6:22-23
5:13-16 "At that time Jesus said to his disciples"	14:34-35, 11:33
5:17-19 "At that time Jesus said to his disciples"	void
5:20-24 "At that time Jesus said to his disciples"	void
5:25-26 "Then Jesus said to his disciples"	12:57-59
5:27-30 "Again he said to them"	void
5:31-42 "Again Jesus said to his disciples"	void, 16:18, void, 6:29-30

5:43-6:1 "Again Jesus said to his disciples"	6:27-28, 32-36, void
6:2-4 "Again Jesus said to them"	void
6:5-15 "At that time Jesus said to his disciples"	11:2-4
6:16-18 "Again he said to them"	void
6:19-23 "Again he said to them"	12:33-34, 11:34-35
6:24-7:5 "At that time Jesus said to his disciples"	16:13, 12:22-31, 6:37-42
7:6-12 "Again he said to them"	void, 11:9-13, 6:31
7:13-14 "At that time Jesus said to his disciples"	13:23-24
7:15-23 "Again he said to them"	6:43-44, 6:46, 13:27
7:24-29 "Again he said to them"	6:47-49, 4:32

One can see that the only possible exception to the rule stated above is the sequence of the Lucan parallels to Matt 5:31-6:1. Luke parallels Matt 5:42 with 6:29-30. He begins the next section with 6:27. Even here, however, the sequence is broken. In every other instance where the Hebrew Matthew has an introductory formula, the Lucan parallel corresponds to the rule.

This demonstration may suggest that a common source (or sources) stands (stand) behind this collection of sayings in Matthew and Luke and that the two evangelists chose different arrangements for the material. If so, the superfluous introductory formulas appearing in the Hebrew text are telltale remnants of the source(s).

I append here a list of twenty-seven unique readings from Matt 3-12 (differing from all other existing witnesses to the Matthean text) where Shem-Tob's text agrees with one or more witnesses to the Lucan version of Q.

#### Hebrew Matthew 3-12 = Luke Q

3:9	Greek Matt "for"; Heb Matt "truly" = Luke Q 3:8 Lvt(e) "truly truly"
4:7	Greek Matt "it is written"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 4:12 Sy
4:8	Greek Matt "again"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 4:5
5:7	whole vs omit Heb Matt = Luke
5:15	Greek Matt "under a bushel"; Heb Matt "in a hidden place" → Luke Q 11:33 "in a hidden place"
5:39	Greek Matt "turn"; Heb Matt "provide/offer" = Luke Q 6:29
5:46	Greek Matt "do the same"; Heb Matt "love those who love them" = Luke Q 6:32



- 6:9 Greek Matt "who art in heaven"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 11:2 P<sup>75</sup>  $\kappa$ BL 1 22 372 443\* 700 1192\* 1210 1342 1582 Lvt (aur gat g<sup>1</sup>) Lvg Ss Marcion Ar Or
- 6:13 Greek Matt "evil"; Heb Matt "all evil" = Luke Q 11:4 Et
- 6:31 Greek Matt "what shall we wear"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 12:29
- 7:12 Greek Matt "thus/so"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 6:31
- 7:12 Greek Matt "also you"; omit Heb Matt = Luke 6:31 P<sup>45(vid)</sup> B 579 700 1241 Lvt (aur ff<sup>2</sup> 1 r<sup>1</sup>) Clem
- 8:21 Greek Matt "Lord"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 9:59 B\*DV 1009 2766 Lvt(d) Sy<sup>a</sup>
- 8:21 Greek Matt "first"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 9:59 W 69 1187 1352 Sj (1 ms)
- 10:19 + "that you are in need" Heb Matt → Luke 12:12 "That which is necessary"
- 11:11 Greek Matt "But he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 7:28 5 475\* 1080 Clem Rec 1.60.1-2
- 11:16 + "Again Jesus said" Heb Matt → Luke Q 7:31 Byz txt
- 11:18 + "concerning" Heb Matt = Luke Q 7:33 Et
- 11:22 Greek Matt "in the day of judgment"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 10:14 P<sup>45</sup> D 472 1009 1241 Lvt (ed1) Gg (I)
- 11:25 Greek Matt "answered"; Heb Matt "raised himself up (in the Holy [-ABDE] Spirit)" ABDEG = Luke Q 10:21
- 11:27 + "alone" Heb Matt = Luke Q 10:22 Dtp Marcion
- 11:27 Greek Matt "to reveal"; Heb Matt "to reveal him" = Luke Q 10:22 Lvt (gat)
- 11:27 Greek Matt "wishes"; omit Heb Matt (EF) = Luke Q 10:22 Ath Clem Cyr Marcion Iren
- 12:22 Greek Matt "so that the dumb spoke"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 11:14 Lvt (a<sup>2</sup> b)
- 12:23 Greek Matt "all"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 11:14 (= par Mt 9:33)
- 12:39 Greek Matt "the prophet"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 11:29 P<sup>45</sup> P<sup>75</sup>  $\kappa$  B D L  $\Xi$  700 892 1241 2542 Lvt Lvg Sj Cs Ar(mss) Gg (II) (= par Mt 16:4 mss)
- 12:45 Greek Matt "goes"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 11:26 2322 Cyr

The Gospel of Luke was certainly available to Shem-Tob in the fourteenth century. The concept of Q, a modern day hypothetical source used in the composition of Matthew and Luke, however, was wholly unknown in the fourteenth century. Supposition about Q's existence goes back only to the middle of the nineteenth century when German researchers sought to unravel the complexities

of the synoptic problem and developed the Two Document Hypothesis.<sup>48</sup> Q was thought to be one of two sources, Mark being the other, which Matthew and Luke used in their writing.<sup>49</sup>

If a relationship between Shem-Tob and Q can be maintained, as suggested by the above discussion, it would be significant. Since recognition of this source emerged five hundred years after Shem-Tob, any relationship between these two would necessarily go back much earlier than the fourteenth century, perhaps even to the formative years of the synoptic tradition.

#### V. Shem-Tob and the Coptic Gospel of Thomas

In a 1960 study, Tjitze Baarda demonstrated a connection between the Gospel of Thomas and the Syro-Latin tradition, including the Diatessaron of Tatian.<sup>50</sup> He listed numerous agreements of Thomas with Codex Bezae, Marcion, the Old Latin manuscripts of the Gospels (especially a, b, and e), and the Old Syriac tradition. He located more than seventy agreements between Thomas and Sy<sup>a</sup> and scarcely fewer than this between Thomas and sy<sup>c</sup> and Sy<sup>p</sup>. He also isolated 130 instances where Thomas has a variant in agreement with one or more recensions of the Diatessaron. A conclusion which Baarda drew from his tabulation is: "All indications are that the Gospel of Thomas must be closely connected to a certain type of Western text in Syria."<sup>51</sup>

In a final column, called "Varia," Baarda listed an occasional agreement between Thomas and other textual traditions including five agreements with Mt<sup>(H)</sup>, which he called a "well-known Hebrew text of Matthew."<sup>52</sup> Baarda's Mt<sup>(H)</sup>

<sup>48</sup>See, for instance, H. J. Holtzmann, *Die synoptischen Evangelien. Ihr Ursprung und ihr geschichtlicher Charakter* (Leipzig: Engelmann, 1863). For recent reconstructions of Q, see Frans Neirynck, *Q-Synopsis. The Double Tradition Passages in Greek* (Leuven: University Press, 1988); John S. Kloppenborg, *Q Parallels* (Sonoma CA: Polebridge Press, 1988).

<sup>49</sup>A vast literature on the synoptic problem exists. See B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins* (London: Macmillan, 1924); Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Priority of Mark and the 'Q' Source in Luke," in *Jesus and Man's Hope*, ed. David G. Buttrick, Perspective Books (Pittsburg: Pittsburg Theological Seminary, 1970-71) 131-70; William R. Farmer, *The Synoptic Problem: A Critical Analysis* (repr.: Dillsboro NC: Western North Carolina Press, 1976; =1964).

<sup>50</sup>Tjitze Baarda, "Thomas en Tatianus," in R. Schippers and T. Baarda, *Het Evangelie van Thomas* (Kampen: Kok, 1960) 135-55. I have made use of the English version published in T. Baarda, *Early Transmission of Words of Jesus: Thomas, Tatian and the Text of the New Testament*, ed. J. Helderman and S. J. Noorda (Amsterdam: VU Boekhandel, 1983) 37-49.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 48.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 39

is in fact the Hebrew Matthew published in 1555 by du Tillet.<sup>53</sup> I demonstrated above that du Tillet's Hebrew Matthew represents an extensive revision of the Shem-Tob type text, including both stylistic and substantive modification. The latter changes were especially designed to bring the Hebrew into agreement with the canonical Greek and Latin texts.

If Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is inserted into Baarda's chart, as a replacement for the text of du Tillet, the agreements between Thomas and the Hebrew Matthew rise significantly. Instead of five agreements, Thomas now agrees with the Hebrew 22 times. This is considerably higher than Thomas's agreements with Codex Bezae (15 times) and Marcion (17 times), as noted by Baarda, and close to half as many agreements Thomas has with the Old Latin (48 times). The following is a list of Shem-Tob's agreements with Thomas. The order of the list is Baarda's.

- 19:30 "and the last first" omit: Thomas 4 Shem-Tob
- 13:47 "fisherman/fishermen" Thomas 8 Shem-Tob
- 13:48 "chose" Thomas 8 Shem-Tob
- 7:3 "see"<sup>2</sup> Thomas 26 Shem-Tob
- 5:14 "being built on" Thomas 32 Shem-Tob
- 5:15 "in a hidden place" Thomas 33 Shem-Tob
- 5:15 "he puts/they put" Thomas 33 Shem-Tob
- 23:13 "wish" Thomas 39 Shem-Tob
- 12:32 "the Father" Thomas 44 Shem-Tob (comment only following 12:37)
- 12:35 "which is in his heart" Thomas 45 Shem-Tob
- 6:24 "honor" Thomas 47 Shem-Tob
- 9:17 "lest" Thomas 47 Shem-Tob
- 9:16 (explicit contrast between "old" and "new") Thomas 47 Shem-Tob
- 17:20 "from here" omit: Thomas 48 Shem-Tob
- 17:20 "to there" omit: Thomas 48 Shem-Tob
- 13:24 "is like" Thomas 57 Shem-Tob
- 13:29 "to them" Thomas 57 Shem-Tob
- 9:38 "therefore" omit: Thomas 73 Shem-Tob
- 6:20 "devour" Thomas 76 Shem-Tob
- 8:20 "of the air" omit: Thomas 86 Shem-Tob
- 8:20 "have"<sup>2</sup> Thomas 86 Shem-Tob
- 8:20 "his (head)" Thomas 86 Shem-Tob

<sup>53</sup>For my assessment of this Hebrew text see Howard, "The Textual Nature of an Old Hebrew Version of Matthew."

The Gospel of Thomas survives today in its entirety in the Coptic translation of a lost Greek, which was probably written in the second century, or even the latter part of the first. The original collection of the sayings may have been written in Greek, Aramaic, or Syriac. It was discovered as part of Codex II of the Coptic Gnostic Library from Nag Hammadi, Egypt, which was buried in the fourth century and uncovered in 1945. Three fragments of the Greek were published in 1897 and 1904 among the Oxyrhynchus papyri, dating to the third century.<sup>54</sup>

Shem-Tob's relationship with Thomas is similar to his relationship with Codex Sinaiticus, the Old Syriac, and Q. Each of these works was lost in antiquity only to be discovered in modern times. It is highly unlikely that Shem-Tob had direct contact with the Gospel of Thomas. The agreements of his Matthew with Thomas, therefore, must be traced to the early centuries of the Christian era.

#### VI. Shem-Tob and the Pseudo-Clementine Writings<sup>55</sup>

The Pseudo-Clementine writings (*Recognitions* and *Homilies*<sup>56</sup>), when quoting or referring to Matthew, occasionally agree with Shem-Tob's Hebrew text against the canonical Greek. The following is a sampling of these readings. (Collations are based on NA<sup>27</sup>.)

Matthew

- 8:26] + "immediately" (τάχιστα) Hom 19. 14. 3 = ומיד Heb Matt
- 11:11b "Yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" omit  
Rec 1. 60. 1-2 = Shem-Tob (cf. mss 5, 475\* 1080\* of Luke 7.28)
- 13:21, 22 "stumbles/becomes fruitless" (σκανδαλίζεται/ἀκαρπὸς γίνεταί)]  
"The wicked demon steals away the words of salvation, and snatches them away from his memory" (*malus daemon salutis verba furatur et de memoria rapit*) Rec 1. 26. 1-2 → "Satan causes him to forget . . . Satan causes him to forget the word of God that he should make no fruit" (השטן משכח . . . השטן משכח דבר האל ולא יעשה פרי) Heb Matt

<sup>54</sup>For a brief overview of the Gospel of Thomas see Ron Cameron, "Thomas, Gospel of," in *ABD* 6:535-40.

<sup>55</sup>See George Howard, "The Pseudo-Clementine Writings and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew," *NTS* 40 (1994): 622-28.

<sup>56</sup>A third, minor work is the *Epitomes*. All English translations of the *Recognitions* and *Homilies* are taken from Thomas Smith's in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 8, ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (repr.: Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951). The Greek and the Latin are taken from Bernhard Rehm, *Die Pseudoklementinen. I Homilien, II Rekognitionen*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1969, 1965).



- 16:16 "You are the Christ the Son of the living God" (σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος) ] omit "Christ" Hom 17. 18. 2 = Heb Matt (comment after 16:20)<sup>57</sup>
- 23:26 "First cleanse the inside of the cup," (καθάρισον πρῶτον τὸ ἐντὸς τοῦ ποτηρίου) ] omit "cup" Rec 6. 11. 3-4 = Heb Matt.

Some agreements between the Pseudo-Clementines and Shem-Tob's Matthean text are shared by a few other witnesses. Two of the most important are the following:

- 5.14 "A city set on a hill" (πόλις . . . ἐπάνω ὁρους κειμένη) ] "A city built on a hill" (ᾠκοδομημένην) Hom 3. 67. 1 = בנייה Heb Matt (cf. Matt 5.14 Sy<sup>acp</sup> Geo Hil; Pap. Oxy. 1 nr. 7 πόλις οἰκοδομημένη ἐπ' ἄκρον ὁρους ἱψηλοῦς [= Thomas 32]; Dta 8. 41)
- 10.5 "Unto the city of the Samaritans" (εἰς πόλιν Σαμαριτῶν) ] "cities" *civitates* Rec 1.57.3 = ובשרי Shem-Tob (cf. Matt 10:5 [a] b aur f h l, vg).

The Pseudo-Clementines were possibly available to Shem-Tob in the fourteenth century, but it is doubtful that he would have had any interest in these esoteric books. In a later section, I will take them up again and argue that the author of the Pseudo-Clementines knew a Shem-Tob type Matthean text and that he reacted negatively to it by polemizing against its exalted image of John the Baptist.

## VII. Shem-Tob and the Tol'doth Yeshu<sup>58</sup>

A textual relationship exists between Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew and the Jewish medieval writing known as the Tol'doth Yeshu.<sup>59</sup>

The Tol'doth Yeshu is a medieval Jewish antigospel which exists in various forms. According to some, it dates ca. 500 CE.<sup>60</sup> According to others, it dates to

<sup>57</sup>For a discussion of Shem-Tob's comment see 217-18, below.

<sup>58</sup>See George Howard, "A Primitive Hebrew Gospel of Matthew and the Tol'doth Yeshu," *NTS* 34 (1988): 60-70.

<sup>59</sup>Various texts of the Tol'doth Yeshu are published in Samuel Krauss, *Das Leben Jesu nach jüdischen Quellen* (Berlin: Calvary, 1902). The text is also conveniently published in the anthology: J. D. Eisenstein, *Ozar Wikuhim* (Israel, 1969) 226-35. A recent discussion of the Tol'doth Yeshu, the publication of yet another version, a bibliography, and an updating of the issues is to be found in Günter Schlichting, *Ein jüdisches Leben Jesu* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1982).

<sup>60</sup>Krauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, 246.

the tenth century.<sup>61</sup> It draws upon traditions that are reflected in the Talmud and Origen's *Contra Celsum*.<sup>62</sup>

In brief, the Tol'doth Yeshu states that Jesus was born illegitimate, performed miracles blasphemously by pronouncing the Divine Name, and was executed by the Jews. His body was stolen from the tomb by Yehuda the gardener, an act which led to the claim that he had arisen from the dead.

The following are some linguistic and textual affinities between the Tol'doth Yeshu and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew.

1. According to the Tol'doth Yeshu, Jesus' original name was Yehoshua (יהושע). Later, when he became a heretic, his name was changed to Yeshu (ישו). The explanation given for this change is that ישו stands for ימח שמו וזכרו, meaning: "may his name and memory be blotted out."<sup>63</sup> Whatever can be made of this story, the spelling ישו for the name of Jesus became common in medieval Jewish polemics and can be found even in the Talmud (cf. b.Sanh. 43<sup>a</sup>).

A similar linguistic phenomenon occurs in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. In the birth narrative at 1:21 and 25, the text refers to Jesus as Yeshua (ישוע), an alternate form of Yehoshua. Elsewhere, the text refers to him as Yeshu (ישו). Though never clearly stated, the implication is that Jesus' name was changed.

That the two documents would converge accidentally in this way is hardly conceivable. Their agreement in the different spellings of Jesus' name strongly suggests a literary and textual contact.

2. The Tol'doth Yeshu reports that Jesus was executed by hanging,<sup>64</sup> an assertion previously made in the Talmud (b.Sanh. 43<sup>a</sup>): "And it is tradition: on the eve of Pesah they hung [תליאדו] Jesus [הנאזרני]."<sup>65</sup>

<sup>61</sup>Joseph Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth*, trans. Herbert Danby (New York: Macmillan, 1946) 53. For other proposals (from the first to the tenth centuries) see Schlichting, *Ein jüdisches Leben Jesu*, 2. Schonfield distinguished between the Tol'doth and an Ur-Tol'doth, suggesting that the latter goes back to about the end of the fourth century. See Hugh J. Schonfield, *According to the Hebrews* (London: Duckworth, 1937) 227.

<sup>62</sup>Ernst Bammel suggests that the substructure of the Tol'doth Yeshu has something in common with the oral tradition behind the canonical Gospels. See Ernst Bammel, "Christian Origins in Jewish Tradition," *NTS* 13 (1966-67): 317-35. See also Ernst Bammel, "Ex Illa Itaque Die Consilium Fecerunt . . . , in Ernst Bammel, ed., *The Trial of Jesus*, SBT 2nd ser. 13 (Naperville IL: Alec R. Allenson, 1970) 11-40.

<sup>63</sup>See Krauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, 68.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 80.

<sup>65</sup>The Tol'doth sometimes describes Jesus' execution as by stoning (סלף) and then hanging (תליה), making his death precede the hanging according to ancient Jewish custom. See *ibid.*, 45, 120, 128. Other references in the Tol'doth speak of his death by "strangulation" (תק) and occasionally by צלב, which can mean either "to hang" or "to crucify." *Ibid.*, 80, 141, 147.

The Hebrew Matthew also depicts Jesus' death as by hanging, חלה, in 27:23, 26, 31; 28:5, though occasionally the word צליבה is also used (26:2, 27:32, 27:35). חלה is the same word used in reference to the death of Judas Iscariot, who is said to have taken a rope (חבל) and hanged (חלה) himself (27:5). The use of חלה in both instances may suggest that a *lex talionis* was meant by the author. Judas, the betrayer, died like Jesus the betrayed.

3. The Tol'doth Yeshu and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew have several important vocabulary agreements. The Tol'doth Yeshu is a parody of the canonical Gospels and the traditional Christian understanding of the life of Jesus. Without denying the miraculous and meritorious feats ascribed to Jesus in the Gospels, it turns the events and stories around in order to present Jesus in a bad light. The Tol'doth Yeshu, for example, affirms the miracles of Jesus, but says that he did them illegitimately by pronouncing the Divine Name. It presents the resurrection scene as a mistaken belief, arguing that Yehuda the gardener stole the body of Jesus, leaving the tomb empty. Many of the stories in the Gospels are thus changed in arrangement and character.

Within this context, the Tol'doth Yeshu often makes direct contact with the Hebrew Matthew in its choice of vocabulary. A case can be made, in fact, that the author of the Tol'doth Yeshu used a Shem-Tob type Matthew to construct his parody.

(a) The Tol'doth Yeshu, corresponding to common rabbinic usage, employs חכמים, "sages,"<sup>66</sup> where the Greek Gospels use γραμματεῖς, "scribes." The Greek γραμματεῖς would have been better represented by the word ספרים, if the author had wished to satirize the Greek gospels. His use of חכמים may suggest that he employed a Shem-Tob type Hebrew text which also regularly uses חכמים instead of ספרים (23:2, *passim*).

(b) In the Tol'doth Yeshu, פרשים "horsemen" refers to those who were sent to arrest Jesus.<sup>67</sup> Although the canonical Greek speaks of *soldiers* arresting and inflicting punishment on Jesus, it never refers to the soldiers as "horsemen." Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew, however, uses the exact term, פרשים, in Matt 27:27, where it reads: "The horsemen [פרש] of the court took Jesus under guard."

(c) The Tol'doth Yeshu frequently calls the disciples of Jesus "violent men" (פריצים);<sup>68</sup> the canonical Gospels never use this term for the disciples. The Greek

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 39, 66, 71, *passim*.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 42, 72, 119; esp. Eisenstein, *Ozar Wikuhim*, 228: והמלכה שלחה פרשים לחיפוש.

<sup>68</sup>Krauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, 42, 80, 82, *passim*. Krauss notes this point himself on 257n.14. For a discussion of the term used in reference to Jesus' disciples see William Horbury, "Christ as Brigand in Ancient Anti-Christian Polemic," in *Jesus and the Politics of His Day*, ed. Ernst Bammel and C. F. D. Moule (Cambridge: Cambridge University

equivalent, βίασται, occurs only at Matt 11:12 and refers to violent men who have been taking the kingdom of heaven by force. These, of course, are not the disciples of Jesus.

Shem-Tob's Hebrew text uses the term "violent men" for those who are acquaintances of Jesus, sometimes portraying them in a favorable light. At 21:32 it reads: "John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him. But the violent men [הפריצים] and harlots believed him." At 9:10 it reads: "Many violent [פריצים] and evil men were at the table and behold they were dining with Jesus and his disciples." Finally, at 11:19 it reads: "But the Son of Man has come eating and drinking and one says concerning him: he is a glutton, a drunkard, and a friend to violent men [פריצים] and sinners."

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew reports that Jesus associated with, commended, and was a friend to the פריצים of his day, thus making another linguistic contact with the Tol'doth Yeshu.

(d) The Tol'doth Yeshu and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew both employ the word עמד (to stand) for the resurrection of Jesus. The Tol'doth Yeshu, of course, argues against the actual resurrection of Jesus, but in doing so it makes verbal reference to it. Usually the Tol'doth Yeshu speaks of Jesus having "gone up into heaven" (עלה בשמים)<sup>69</sup>, or having "gone to Heaven" (הלך לשמים).<sup>70</sup> In one instance, however, it clearly refers to Jesus as "standing up" (עמד) from the grave.<sup>71</sup>

"Standing up" is not the usual Christian image for the resurrection of Jesus. The word is possibly used with the meaning of "resurrection" in Ezek 37:10, where the valley of dry bones is said to come to life. A similar reference is Dan 12:13.<sup>72</sup>

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew also employs עמד for the resurrection of Jesus, 27:63-64; 28:6-8. In addition, it repeatedly uses עמד in the trial and passion scenes, to build a crescendo toward the climatic event of the resurrection of Jesus. The word עמד thus becomes a wordplay in the narrative. Observe the following differences between the canonical Greek and the Hebrew in this section of the text.

Matt 26:69. "Peter was *standing* [עומד] at the entrance of the courtyard and there came near to him a maid who said to him: were you not *standing* [עומד] with Jesus the Galilean?" The Greek reads "sat" (ἐκάθητο) in the first

Press, 1984) 183-95; esp. 191 and 194. See in the same volume the article by E. Bammel, "Jesus as a Political Agent in a Version of the Josippon," 197-209.

<sup>69</sup>Krauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, 46, 120; *עלה השמים* 129.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 80.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 48.

<sup>72</sup>Cf. CD IV. 3-4 which speaks of the Sons of Zadok who "will stand [העמידים] at the end of days."



occurrence where the Hebrew reads "standing" and has nothing corresponding to the second occurrence.

*Matt 26:71.* "When he passed through the gate another maid saw him and said to those who were standing [עומדים] there: this man was standing [עומד] with Jesus in Nazareth." The Greek has nothing corresponding to either instance of "standing."

*Matt 26:73.* "After a little while those who were standing [העומדים] in the courtyard drew near to Peter and said to him: you are from this prophet's group." The Greek reads: "those who were standing" (οἱ ἑστῶτες).

*Matt 27:11.* "Jesus was standing [עומד] before Pilate." The Greek reads "stood" (ἑστῆθη).

*Matt 27:47.* "One of those standing [מהעומדים] there said: this one is calling for Elijah." The Greek reads "standing" (ἑστῆτακας).

*Matt 27:54.* "The centurion and those standing [העומדים] with him watching Jesus saw the earthquake and the things which were done." The Greek has nothing corresponding to "standing."

*Matt 27:55.* "There were there many women standing [עומדות] at a distance." The Greek reads "watching" (θεωροῦσαι) instead of "standing."

*Matt 27:63.* "They said to him: Sir, we remember that this liar said while still alive that at the end of three days he would stand up [עומד]." The Greek reads "arise" (ἐγείρομαι).

*Matt 27:64.* "Afterwards they might say to the people that he stood up [עומד] from death." The Greek reads "arose" (ἤγερθη).

*Matt 28:2.* "Then the earth shook because the angel of the Lord descended from heaven to the tomb, overturned the stone and stood still [עומד]." The Greek reads "sat" (ἐκάθητο) instead of "stood still."

*Matt 28:4.* "From fear of him the guards were dismayed and stood [עומד] like dead men." The Greek reads "became" (ἐγενήθησαν) instead of "stood."

*Matt 28:6.* "Come, therefore, and see the place where the Lord stood up [עומד]." The Greek reads "lay" (ἔκειτο) instead of "stood up."

*Matt 28:7.* "Then go immediately and tell his disciples that the Lord has already stood up [עומד]." The Greek reads "arisen" (ἤγερθη).

*Matt 28:8.* "But with great joy because the Lord had stood up [עומד] alive." The Greek has nothing corresponding to "stood up."

A comparison of the Greek and Hebrew texts results in the following statistics: (1) The Hebrew uses עומד five times in reference to the resurrection of Jesus (27:63, 64; 28:6, 7, 8). In three of the instances, the Greek reads some form of the verb ἐγείρω "to arise" (27:63, 64; 28:7); In the remaining instances (28:6, 8) the Greek reads a word with a different meaning or has nothing corresponding at all. (2) In the trial, passion and resurrection scenes, the Hebrew employs the word עומד an additional eleven times (26:29 twice, 71 twice, 73; 27:11, 47, 54, 55; 28:2, 4) in reference to various forms of "standing." In

these passages, the Greek reads ἵστημι "standing" three times (26:73; 27:11, 47). (3) The Hebrew consistently uses the word עומד for standing and resurrection; the Greek employs ἵστημι for standing, and ἐγείρω for resurrection.

The wordplay, so clearly operative in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew, is totally lacking in the Greek.

To conclude, the unusual nature of the word עומד, meaning "resurrection," suggests another literary connection between Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew and the Tol'doth Yeshu.

#### VIII. Shem-Tob and the *Protevangelium of James*

Two passages in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew agree with the *Protevangelium of James* (second or third century).<sup>73</sup> In Matt 1:19, the Hebrew text reads: "Joseph was a righteous man and did not wish to dwell with her [Mary] or to expose her by bringing her to shame or binding her over to death [למות]. He rather wished to conceal her." The canonical Greek reads: "And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wishing to expose her, desired to put her away secretly." The canonical tradition contains no reference to binding Mary over to "death."

The concept of death occurs in *Protev. James 14:1*, where the text reads that Joseph was afraid of delivering up "innocent blood unto a judgment of death" (αἷμα ἀθῶον εἰς κρίμα θανάτου).

A second passage is Matt 2:12. The Hebrew reads: "Then they were commanded in a dream by the angel [מהמלאך] who spoke to them not to return to Herod; so they returned to their land by another route." The canonical Greek lacks the reference to angel. *Protev. James 21:4*, on the other hand, reads: "And being warned by the angel [ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀγγέλου] not to enter into Judea, they withdrew to their own country by another route."<sup>74</sup>

I conclude this section with the observation that the textual affinities of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew strongly suggest that his text predates the fourteenth century. It is replete with readings reflected in diverse ancient traditions, some of which were lost in antiquity. These include Codex Sinaiticus, manuscripts used by Eusebius in Caesarea, the Old Syriac and the Old Latin versions, the Lucan version of Q, the Gospel of John, the Coptic Gospel of Thomas, the Pseudo-Clementine writings, the Tol'doth Yeshu, and the *Protevangelium of James*.

<sup>73</sup>See Edgar Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1959) 1:370-88.

<sup>74</sup>A similar statement is found in *Pseudo-Matthew 16:2* (an eighth- or ninth-century apocryphal gospel), where the text reads: "And when they were going to return to Herod the King, they were warned in their sleep by an angel (ab angelo) not to return to Herod . . . and they returned to their own land by another route."

Shem-Tob certainly had access to the Latin Vulgate (which sometimes agrees with the Old Latin version), the Gospels of Luke and John, and the Tol'doth Yeshu. He may have had access to one or more Old Latin manuscripts, the Pseudo-Clementine writings, and the *Protevangelium of James*, though what interest he would have had in such writings is unclear. But, it is unlikely—virtually impossible (?)—that he had access to Codex Sinaiticus, manuscripts used by Eusebius in Caesarea, the Old Syriac version, the Gospel of Thomas, or Q as a separate document.

Even if Shem-Tob had had access to all of these documents, there does not seem to be any reason why he would have created an eclectic text made up of readings from each of these writings. It is much more reasonable to assume that Shem-Tob inherited his Hebrew Matthew from earlier generations of Jewish tradents and that the unique and archaic readings in his text go back to the early centuries of the Christian era.

### Theological Motifs in Shem-Tob's Matthew

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew contains theological motifs not found in the Greek or Latin. None of these motifs enhances the polemic against Christianity. Some portray Christianity more, not less, attractive to the Jewish mind, reflecting a lesser disparity between Judaism and Christianity than the Greek or Latin. Examples include the text's views concerning the Law and the Gentiles.

Some of the motifs are heretical when judged by the standard of traditional Christianity. These include the text's views regarding the Gentiles (saved only in the messianic era), the Christ/Messiah (never equated with Jesus), and John the Baptist (portrayed in an exalted position). A brief overview of the salient theological motifs follows.

1. *The Law*. In Matt 5:17-48, Jesus reveals his attitude toward the Law. The text reports his words as follows:

Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matt 5:17-19 RSV)

Following this logion, the text records six antitheses (5:21-48). Each antithesis (except perhaps the last) includes a quotation from the law, followed

by Jesus' comment on the quotation. The form of the antitheses is basically the same in each case: "You have heard that it was said . . . but I say to you. . . ."

In the Greek text, Jesus sometimes radicalizes and internalizes the law without revoking the law. This is the case in the first pair of antitheses, on killing and adultery. In the second pair, on divorce and swearing, Jesus actually appears to revoke the letter of the law.<sup>75</sup>

In Shem-Tob's Matthew, this is not the case. According to the Hebrew, Jesus radicalizes and internalizes the law both in regard to killing and adultery and in regard to divorce and swearing. In neither of these pairs does he revoke the law. Consider the following contrasts.

#### Divorce Matt 5:31-32

[Greek]

It was also said, "Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce." But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, makes her an adulteress. (RSV)

[Hebrew]

Again Jesus said to his disciples: "You have heard what was said to those of long ago that everyone who leaves his wife and divorces her is to give her a bill of divorce. . . . And I say to you that everyone who leaves his wife *is* to give her a bill of divorce. But concerning adultery. . . ."

#### Swearing Matt 5:33-37

[Greek]

Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, "You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn." But I say to you, do not swear *at all*, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God. (RSV)

[Hebrew]

Again you have heard what was said to those of long ago: you shall not swear *by my name* falsely, but you shall return to the Lord your oath. But I say to you not to swear *in vain* by *anything*, either by heaven because it is the throne of God. . . .

The difference between the Greek and the Hebrew is striking. In the Greek, Jesus appears to revoke the law: In the Hebrew, he internalizes and radicalizes the law, but does not revoke it. According to the Greek, all divorce, except for unchastity, involves adultery. According to the Hebrew, adultery may be involved, but everyone who leaves his wife *is* to give her a bill of divorce,

<sup>75</sup>Some dispute that Jesus ever revoked the letter of the Law. For a recent discussion, see Geza Vermes, *The Religion of Jesus the Jew* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993) 21-37. Without entering into this debate, I wish only to show that the Hebrew text of Shem-Tob, in the relevant passages, is less anti-Law than the Greek text.



according to the law. Again, in the Greek, Jesus forbids all swearing. In the Hebrew, he forbids only *vain* swearing.

2. *The Gentiles*. Shem-Tob's Matthew does not envision the inclusion of the Gentiles in the present age. Matt 10:5-6 reads: "To the lands of the Gentiles do not go and into the cities of the Samaritans do not enter. Go to the sheep who have strayed from the house of Israel."

Matt 15:26 (the pericope on the Syrophenician woman) reads: "It is not good that a man should take the bread from his children and give it to the dogs." By 'children' Jesus means the Jews, by 'dogs', the Gentiles. The woman acknowledges his view (it was in fact a common Jewish view), then turns it to her own advantage: "Often the dogs eat the pieces of bread that fall from the table of their masters." Impressed with her acquiescence to the Jewish view, Jesus grants the woman's request and heals her daughter.

Both passages occur in the canonical Greek, but their harshness<sup>76</sup> is softened by the Great Commission at the end of the Gospel. The canonical text of Matt 28:19 reads: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." This ending, opening the doors to the Gentiles, sets up a salvation-history schema for the canonical Matthew, in which Jesus' restricted earthly ministry is expanded in the postresurrection period to include the Gentiles. John Meier explains the schema: "The same Jesus who, during his earthly ministry, forbids the Twelve a mission among the Gentiles and Samaritans is also the Jesus who, as the exalted Son of Man, commands the Eleven to make disciples of *panta ta Ethne*."<sup>77</sup>

In Shem-Tob's Matthew, this interpretation is impossible. As reported above, the Hebrew gospel ends without opening the doors to the Gentiles. Shem-Tob's text reads: "Go and teach them to carry out all the things which I have commanded you forever." This is said only in reference to the Jews. Nothing is said about teaching the Gentile nations or baptizing them. Israel's superiority over the Gentiles, with no hope in the present world offered to the Gentiles, is maintained to the very end of the Hebrew gospel.

This motif occurs repeatedly throughout Shem-Tob's text. Observe the following comparisons between the Greek and Hebrew texts:

<sup>76</sup>Beare remarks in regard to 15:26: "The harshness of the saying of Jesus . . . still puzzles the Christian reader, who finds it impossible to imagine Jesus addressing a distraught mother in such terms. . . . Dare we see in all this a reflection of the reluctance with which the primitive Church embarked upon the Gentile mission?" Francis W. Beare, *The Earliest Records of Jesus* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962) 132-33.

<sup>77</sup>John P. Meier, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel: A Redactional Study of Matt 5:17-48* (Rome: Biblical Institute, 1976) 27.

Matt 9:13. The Greek text reads: "For I came not to call [καλέσαι] the righteous, but sinners" (RSV). The word *call*, suggesting an initial summons to sinners, is vitiated by the Hebrew, which reads: "I have not come to restore [להשיב] the righteous but the wicked." *Restore* suggests that Jesus' mission was to the wayward who were already among God's people.

Matt 13:38. The Greek text reads: "The field is the world [ὁ κόσμος]" (RSV). The statement is found in the explanation of the Parable of the Weeds of the Field. It implies that Jesus' teaching has a universal aspect. The field which Jesus sows is the entire world. The Hebrew text, reads: "The field is *this* world [העולם הזה]." This is spoken in contrast to the following "the world to come [העדה הבאה]" in vs 39. The idiom: *this world/the world to come*, has special meaning in Jewish parlance, referring to present time and the Messianic future (see 12:32). No universal implication is attached to the wording of the Hebrew text.

Matt 24:14-16. The Greek text reads: "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come. So when you see the desolating sacrilege spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains" (RSV). The saying suggests that the gospel will be preached to the whole world, including the Gentiles, before the desolating sacrilege is seen standing in the holy place. The Hebrew text reads:

And this gospel . . . will be preached in all the earth for a witness concerning me to [against?] all the nations and then the end will come. This is the Anti-Christ and this is the abomination which desolates which was spoken of by Daniel as standing in the holy place. Let the one who reads understand. Then those who are in Judea let them flee to the mountains.

The Hebrew text is difficult. It appears to mean that preaching the gospel to the Gentiles before the end-time is the Anti-Christ and the abomination which desolates. No stronger statement against the salvation of the Gentiles in the present age occurs in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew.

Although the Hebrew Matthew projects no salvation for the Gentiles in the present era, it clearly envisions a *future salvation* for the righteous among the nations. In good Jewish fashion, this salvation is thought to come at the end of the present era. Matt 25:31-34, reads:

When the Son of Man comes in his revelation with his angels then he will sit upon the throne of his glory. All the nations [הגוים] will be gathered before him and he will separate them as the shepherd separates the sheep and the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then he will say to those on his right enter blessed of

my father and inherit for yourselves the kingdom of heaven prepared for you from the creation of the world until now. . . .

The same motif occurs in Matt 12:41-42:

The men of Nineveh will rise up in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it because they turned in repentance at the words of Jonah and I am greater than Jonah. The Queen of Sheba . . . will rise up in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon and behold I am greater than Solomon.

The Gentiles are given a reward in the Kingdom of Heaven, but only *at the end of the present age*. The Gentiles, who rise up against the wicked, do so only *in the judgment*.

The Hebrew gospel corresponds in theology with the Hebrew Bible and later Jewish literature, where it is clearly stated that a great host of Gentiles will join Israel in the golden age to come. Thus: foreigners will join the Lord as ministers, loving his name and keeping his Sabbaths and covenant (Isaiah 56:6-7). Gentiles will come to Zion to learn the law of the Lord (Isa 2:2-4, Micah 4:1-4). Israel's salvation will be a light to the nations, reaching to the ends of the earth (Isa 49:6; cf. Zech 2:11, 8:20-23; Tobit 14:6-7; 1 Enoch 91:14d). God will have mercy on all the nations who stand before him in fear (Ps Sol 17:34 [38]). God will give special care to those nations who have not exploited Israel or trampled Israel underfoot (2 Baruch 72:2-6). The Gentiles will bring their wealth into Jerusalem and bow down to serve Israel (Isa 60:4-7; IQM 12. 13-14; 19:5-6; Tobit 13:13 [11]; Ps Sol 17.31[34]). God will accept them into his kingdom and grant them a place in the Messianic banquet (Isa 25:6).

3. *The Christ*. With the possible exception of 16:16 (to be discussed below), the author of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew never identifies Jesus with the Christ. This is to be contrasted with the Greek text, where the Christ identification is clearly made.

The word *Christ* occurs 18 times in the Greek text of Matthew: 1:1, 16, 17, 18; 2:4; 11:2; 16:16, 20, 21 (B  $\Sigma$ ); 22:42; 23:10; 24:5, 23, 24; 26:63, 68; 27:17, 22. In five instances, the Hebrew has no correspondent to the word *Christ* at all. Compare the following.

Greek	Hebrew
1:1 The book of the genealogy of <i>Jesus Christ</i>	These are the generations of <i>Jesus</i>
1:17 the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations	the Babylonian exile unto <i>Jesus</i> were fourteen generations

1:18 Now the birth of <i>Jesus Christ</i> took place in this way	The birth of <i>Jesus</i> was in this way
11:2 Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the <i>Christ</i>	John, when he was in captivity, heard of the work of <i>Jesus</i>
16:21 From then began <i>Jesus Christ</i> <sup>78</sup> to show his disciples	Henceforth <i>Jesus</i> began to reveal to his disciples

These passages are particularly important, since only here does the author of the Greek text make a clear identification of Jesus with the Christ. In all other instances, the identification is either unclear or made by someone other than the author. Matt 16:16 is a special case and will be discussed below. Since the Hebrew text lacks the word "Christ/Messiah" in these passages, its author never identifies Jesus with the Christ/Messiah.

In 2:4; 22:42; 23:10; 24:23, 24 the title, Christ/Messiah, is used in abstract terms with no clear identification. In 26:63, the high priest asks Jesus if he is the Christ/Messiah. The high priest does not believe that Jesus is the Christ/Messiah and Jesus himself answers with the enigmatic, "You have said so." In 26:68, Jesus is mockingly called Christ/Messiah by a mob. In 1:16; 27:17, 22 the phrase "Jesus who is *called* Christ/Messiah" occurs. But the word *called* throws doubt on whether Jesus is really the Christ. The same phrase occurs in Josephus (*Ant* 20. 200), whom Origen concluded did not accept Jesus as the Christ (*Contra Celsum* 1. 47; *Comm. in Matt* 10. 17).<sup>79</sup> In 24:5, deceivers are envisioned as arising and speaking in Jesus' name, saying "I am the Christ/Messiah." It is unclear whether their deceit lies in their personal claim to be the Christ/Messiah, or their claim that Jesus is the Christ/Messiah. In either case, no credible identification is made that Jesus is the Christ/Messiah.

In 16:20 the Greek reads: "Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ" (RSV). The Hebrew reads: "Then he commanded his disciples not to say that he is the Messiah." The Greek is an injunction to secrecy—not to reveal Jesus' Messiahship; the Hebrew appears to be an injunction against claiming that Jesus is the Messiah.

This leaves only 16:16 where the Hebrew contains a clear statement from Peter and accepted by Jesus that Jesus is the Messiah. The text reads: "Simon, called Petros, answered and said: You are the Messiah, that is, Kristo, the Son of the living God, who has come into this world."

<sup>78</sup>Only mss B and a read *Christ*.

<sup>79</sup>Jos *Ant* 18.63 reads: "He was the Christ." But most scholars believe this is a Christian interpolation. See Joseph Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth* (New York: Macmillan, 1964) 56; Louis H. Feldman, "Flavius Josephus Revisited: the Man, His Writings and His Significance," in *ANRW* 21/2 (1984): 821-35.



If this text is allowed to remain as it now stands, it would be difficult to escape the conclusion that the author agrees with the identification of Jesus as the Christ/Messiah. But, it should be noted that the Hebrew text has been tampered with. The phrase "that is, Kristo" [לעו קריסט], is clearly an addition (see p. 183 above) designed to bring the Hebrew into agreement with the Greek and Latin, which read ὁ χριστός/*Christus* respectively.

There is also evidence that the word "Messiah" [משיח] is an addition. In a subsequent comment,<sup>80</sup> Shem-Tob alludes to this verse in a form lacking the word "Messiah." His comment reads: "Why is it surprising that Peter should say that he is 'the Son of God'?" [ואיך תמה מפיו שומר בן אלקים הוא]. If this represents Shem-Tob's original reading, his present text is again characterized by a modification designed to bring it into harmony with the Greek and Latin canonical texts.

The reading: "You are the Son of God," was known elsewhere in Jewish Christian circles, occurring, in a slightly expanded form, in the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies (17.18.2; ch. 16.15.2): σὺ εἶ υἱὸς τοῦ ζῶντος θεοῦ, "You are the Son of the living God." Compare John 6:69, where the Old Latin b reads *tu es Filius Dei*, "You are the Son of God," and the Old Syriac Sy<sup>c</sup> reads "You are the Son of God."

Although not totally certain, I tentatively conclude that the author of the Hebrew text never equates Jesus with the Christ/Messiah.

4. *John the Baptist*.<sup>81</sup> If Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew fails to identify Jesus with the Christ/Messiah, it is not because his text reduces the importance of Jesus. His text continues to identify Jesus with the Son of God. Jesus simply plays a more celestial, less human role in the Hebrew Matthew.

<sup>80</sup>See 168n.30, above.

<sup>81</sup>A great deal has been written on John the Baptist in modern times. An excellent treatment is Walter Wink, *John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition*, SNTSMS 7 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968). For some assessment and perspective on modern scholarship see John Reumann, "The Quest for the Historical Baptist," in *Understanding the Sacred Text. Essays in honor of Morton S. Enslin on the Hebrew Bible and Christian Beginnings*, ed. John Reumann (Valley Forge PA: Judson Press, 1972) 181-99. Other important, recent treatments are Charles H. H. Scobie, *John the Baptist* (London: SCM, 1964); Roland Schütz, *Johannes der Täufer*, ATANT 50 (Zurich/Stuttgart: Zwingli, 1967); Jürgen Becker, *Johannes der Täufer und Jesus von Nazareth* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1972); Josef Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer: Interpretation—Geschichte—Wirkungsgeschichte*, BZNW 53 (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1989); Robert L. Webb, *John the Baptizer and Prophet: A Socio-Historical Study*, JSNTSup 62 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991); Knut Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers Johannes: Eine Studie zu den religionsgeschichtlichen Ursprüngen des Christentums*, Paderborner Theologische Studien 19 (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1991).

John the Baptist in the Hebrew text also plays a more exalted role than in the canonical gospels. Although never identified with the Christ/Messiah, the Baptist acquires messianic traits. The following passages should be considered.

Matt 11:11. "Truly, I say to you, among all those born of women none has risen greater than John the Baptizer." The familiar phrase that follows in the Greek text, "yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he," is absent in the Hebrew, leaving John's premier greatness unmodified.<sup>82</sup>

Matt 11:13. "For all the prophets and the law spoke *concerning* [על] John." This is to be contrasted with the Greek which reads: "For all the prophets and the law prophesied *until* [ἕως] John."

Matt 17:11. "Indeed Elijah will come and will *save* [וירשע] all the world." This is to be contrasted with the Greek which reads: "Elijah does come, and he is to *restore* [ἀποκαταστήσει] all things."

Matt 21:32. "Because John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him. But violent men and harlots believed him and you saw it and did not turn in repentance. Also afterward you did not repent to believe him." The Greek reads in basic agreement with the Hebrew, but addresses the words to the chief priests and the elders of the people (vs 23). The Hebrew addresses them to Jesus' own disciples (vs 28) and the following comment, absent in the Greek, appears at the conclusion: "He who has ears to hear let him hear in disgrace."

In summary, this series of readings asserts that none is greater than John, the prophets and the law spoke concerning John, John (Elijah) is to save all the world, and Jesus' own disciples are disgraced for not having believed John. In traditional Christianity such a description is usually applied to Jesus. Its application to John the Baptist in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew, elevates the Baptist to a salvific role.

An interesting scenario emerges when the Gospel of John and the Pseudo-Clementine writings are compared with Shem-Tob's Matthew. The polemic against John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel and the Pseudo-Clementines appears to be directed against the image of the Baptist portrayed in Shem-Tob's text.

<sup>82</sup>There is further evidence that this type of text circulated in the ancient world. In the Lucan parallel (Luke 7:28), mss 5, 475\*, and 1080\* omit the qualification to the Baptist's greatness, in agreement with Shem-Tob's reading. This same reading is also inferred by the Pseudo-Clementine Writings. In Rec 1. 60. 1-3, it is reported that one of the disciples of John argued from the words of Jesus that John, not Jesus, is the Christ. The Clementine text reads as follows: "Jesus himself declared that John was greater than all men and all prophets. 'If, then' said he, 'he be greater than all, he must be held to be greater than Moses, and than Jesus himself. But if he be the greatest of all, then must he be the Christ.'" Clearly this argument is based on a Shem-Tob type text.

*John the Baptist:**The Fourth Gospel and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew*

It is well known that the Fourth Gospel includes disparaging remarks about John the Baptist. The Baptist is said to be a witness to the light, but is not himself the light (John 1:7-8). The Baptist says of Jesus: "He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me" (John 1:15, 30). Of himself he says: "I am not the Christ" (John 1:20; 3:28). When asked if he is Elijah or the prophet, he answers, "No" (John 1:21-22). Again of Jesus he says: "Among you stands one whom you do not know, even he who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie" (John 1:26-27). He says: "He [Christ] must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). Finally, it is reported that "John did no sign" (John 10:41), while Jesus did many (John 20:30).

Such disparaging statements have led scholars to speculate that the author of the Fourth Gospel was polemizing against the followers of John the Baptist, who exalted their master above Jesus. At the end of the last century, Baldensperger argued for this position.<sup>83</sup>

Bultmann held a similar view. He argued that the prologue to John was originally a hymn of the Baptist community, which the Evangelist, a former member of this community, had changed to refer to Jesus.<sup>84</sup>

Others accept the polemic against John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel, but argue that it is not a major concern in John,<sup>85</sup> or that the evidence for a rival Baptist community, against which the author of John could polemicize, is too scanty to be conclusive.

Brown, for instance, lists the following evidence for a Baptist community: (1) Acts 18:25, Apollos is said to have known only the baptism of John; (2) Acts 19:1-7, reference is made to twelve Ephesian disciples who had received John's baptism; and (3) the third-century (perhaps based on second-century sources) Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions* I.54, 60 (PG 1, cols 1237f and 1240) where it is said that the disciples of John declared their master to be the Messiah. Brown concludes that this evidence is too meager to argue that a rival Baptist group in the first century claimed that John was the Messiah.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>83</sup>Wilhelm Baldensperger, *Der Prolog des vierten Evangeliums, sein polemischapologischer Zweck* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1898).

<sup>84</sup>Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John. A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971) 17-18.

<sup>85</sup>R. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John* (New York: Seabury, 1980) 1:167-69.

<sup>86</sup>Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, AB 29 (New York: Doubleday, 1966) 1, lxviii.

One might add the evidence of the Synoptic Gospels. They report that some of the contemporaries of John and Jesus confused their identities (Mark 6:14; 8:28); others wondered whether John might be the Christ (Luke 3:15). Also considerable attention has been given to the first chapter of Luke, some scholars arguing that John receives an exalted position in his birth account, and that this account is based on ancient Baptist sources.<sup>87</sup>

Nevertheless, there has been no clear-cut evidence for a Baptist community in the first century, which elevated John the Baptist to messianic status, and with whom the Gospel of John was in conflict.

John A. T. Robinson wrote: "The sole direct evidence that there was such a group at any time is in fact confined to two passages in the *Clementine Recognitions* (I.54 and 60), which are notoriously unreliable as history and cannot at best take us back beyond the second and third centuries AD."<sup>88</sup> Earlier Robinson wrote: "That there were elements of John's following which did not find their way into the Church is indeed very probable; that these elements constituted a rival group to Christianity in the first century, with a competing Christology, is, I believe, without any foundation whatever."<sup>89</sup>

When I first examined Shem-Tob's text of Matthew, I was immediately struck by its treatment of John the Baptist. As demonstrated above, it depicts the Baptist in the exalted terms the Fourth Gospel polemizes against. If the Fourth Gospel was directed against the followers of John the Baptist, one could hardly conceive of a more appropriate document to represent this community than a Shem-Tob type Matthew.

*John the Baptist:**The Pseudo-Clementines and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew*

The Pseudo-Clementine writings contain a polemic against John the Baptist similar to the polemic in the Gospel of John.<sup>90</sup>

These writings have been instrumental in forming the modern understanding of the Ebionites, a Jewish Christian group mentioned by Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* 1.26.2; 3.21.1), Origen (*De princ.* 4.22; *Hom. in Gen.* 3.5; *Contra Cels.* 2.1), Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* 3.27), Epiphanius (*Pan.* 30.1; 30.17), and others. Incorporating sources and layers of tradition, they have been subjected to critical literary

<sup>87</sup>D. Völter, "Die Apokalypse des Zacharias im Evangelium des Lucas," *Theologische Tijdschrift* 30 (1896) 244-69; M. Goguel, *Au seuil de l'évangile: Jean Baptiste* (Paris: Payot, 1927) 74.

<sup>88</sup>John A. T. Robinson, *The Priority of John* (London: SCM Press, 1985) 172.

<sup>89</sup>John A. T. Robinson, "Elijah, John and Jesus: An Essay in Detection," *NTS* 3-4 (1956-1958): 279n.2.

<sup>90</sup>George Howard, "The Pseudo-Clementine Writings and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew," *NTS* 40 (1994): 622-28.



analysis in order to get at their earliest strata. Significant advances have been made by Waitz,<sup>91</sup> Schmidt,<sup>92</sup> Cullmann,<sup>93</sup> Rehm,<sup>94</sup> Schoeps,<sup>95</sup> and others.<sup>96</sup> It is now believed that the *Recognitions* and the *Homilies*, the two major works making up the Pseudo-Clementines, go back to an early third century *Grund-schrift* which is itself a compilation of various works,<sup>97</sup> the oldest of which is the *Kerygmata Petrou*, or the *Preaching of Peter*.<sup>98</sup>

The Pseudo-Clementines include the following negative record about John the Baptist.

1. Rec 1. 60. 1-3. An argument is reported from one of the disciples of John that John, not Jesus, is the Christ. "Jesus Himself declared that John was greater than all men and all prophets," the argument goes. "If, then," said he, he be greater than all, he must be held to be greater than Moses, and than Jesus himself. But if he be the greatest of all, then must he be the Christ."<sup>99</sup> The author of

<sup>91</sup>Hans Waitz, *Die Pseudoklementinen, Homilien und Rekognitionen, eine quellenkritische Untersuchung*, TU 25/4 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1904); "Die Pseudoklementinen und ihre Quellenschriften," *ZNW* 28 (1929): 241-72; "Neues zur Text und Literarkritik der Pseudoklementinen," *ZKG* 52 (1933): 305-18.

<sup>92</sup>Carl Schmidt, *Studien zur den Pseudoklementinen*, TU 46/1 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1929).

<sup>93</sup>Oscar Cullmann, *Le problème littéraire et historique du roman pseudo-clémentin: Etude sur le rapport entre le Gnosticisme et le Judéo-Christianisme* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1930).

<sup>94</sup>Bernhard Rehm, "Zur Entstehung der pseudoclementinischen Schriften," *ZNW* 37 (1938): 77-184.

<sup>95</sup>Hans Joachim Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1949).

<sup>96</sup>For further bibliography see Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* (Utrecht-Antwerp: Spectrum, 1966) 1:62-63.

<sup>97</sup>For a discussion of the sources making up the *Grund-schrift* see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Qumran Scrolls, the Ebionites and Their Literature," *TS* 16 (1955): 335-72; also published in Fitzmyer, *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* (Missoula MT: Scholars' Press, 1974) 435-80, esp. 450. Georg Strecker, "The Kerygmata Petrou," in Edgar Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965) 2:102-27; "On the Problem of Jewish Christianity," in Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971) 241-85.

<sup>98</sup>A discussion of the use of the *Preaching of Peter* in ancient times may be found in Joseph N. Reagan, *The Preaching of Peter: The Beginnings of Christian Apologetic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1923).

<sup>99</sup>*et ecce unus ex discipulis Iohannis adfirmabat, Christum Iohannem fuisse, et non Iesum; in tantum, inquit, ut et ipse Iesus omnibus hominibus et prophetis maiorem esse pronuntiaverit Iohannem. si ergo, inquit, maior est omnibus, sine dubio et Moyseo et ipso*

the *Recognitions* disagrees with the argument and attempts to prove it false. Jesus is the Christ, not John.

2. Rec 1.63.1. The passage reports that Peter taught "the disciples of John not to allow John to be a stumbling-block to them" (*discipulos Iohannis, ne scandalum paterentur in Iohannem*).

3. Hom 2.17.2. The author argues that among men the inferior comes first, then the superior (Hom 2.16). "Wherefore, also, he who was among those born of woman [=John] came first; then he who was among the sons of men [=Christ], came second" (διὸ καὶ ὁ ἐν γεννητοῖς γυναικῶν πρῶτος ἦλθεν, εἴτα ὁ ἐν υἱοῖς ἀνθρώπων δεύτερος ἐπῆλθεν) (Hom 2.17.2).

4. Hom 2.23.1-4. Simon Magus is considered to be the archenemy of Christianity and the most esteemed disciple among the thirty chiefs of John the Baptist. Shortly after John's death, Simon assumes the leadership of the Baptist group.<sup>100</sup>

These passages clearly demonstrate a polemic against John the Baptist in the Pseudo-Clementines. Since the Pseudo-Clementines occasionally quote from a Shem-Tob type text (see pp. 205-206, above), it is hard to escape the conclusion that the polemic against John the Baptist in these writings originated in the author's reaction to a Shem-Tob type text. It can hardly be doubted that the type of text reflected in Shem-Tob's reading of Matt 11:11 is what gave rise to the argument recorded in Rec 1.60.1-3.

## Different Meanings in Shem-Tob's Matthew

Some passages in the Hebrew Matthew differ in meaning from the canonical Greek. A few instances will be noted below.

1. In the Beelzebul (Hebrew: Baalzebul) controversy, recorded in Matt 12:24-28, the Greek reads:

*Iesu maior habendus est. quod si omnium maior est, ispe est Christus.*

<sup>100</sup>Webb, who has written one of the latest full treatments of John the Baptist, does not discuss John's role in the Pseudo-Clementines. *John the Baptizer and Prophet*. Hollenbach recognizes Josephus as our only extrabiblical source for John. Paul W. Hollenbach, "John the Baptist," *ABD* 3:887. See also Hollenbach's treatment in "Social Aspects of John the Baptizer's Preaching Mission in the Context of Palestinian Judaism," *ANRW* II.19.1,852. Bammel recognizes the significance of John's negative position in the Pseudo-Clementines and gives the subject an interesting airing. Ernst Bammel, "The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition," *NTS* 18 (1971-1972): 116-18. For surveys of John in later writings see Carl H. Kraeling, *John the Baptist* (New York/London: Scribner's, 1951) 181-87; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 217-63; 363-84.

<sup>24</sup>But when the Pharisees heard it they said, "It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons." <sup>25</sup>Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand; <sup>26</sup>and if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? <sup>27</sup>And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judge. <sup>28</sup>But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." (RSV)

The passage is commonly understood to mean: (1) Jesus rejects the Beelzebub charge as inappropriate to his ministry;<sup>101</sup> (2) verse 27 refers to Jewish exorcisms. If Jesus casts out demons by the power of Satan, the same must be true of the Pharisees' own disciples;<sup>102</sup> and (3) if Jesus casts out demons by the Spirit of God, in some sense the kingdom of God has already come.

The meaning is different in the Hebrew text because of two major variations. (1) Verse 27 reads: "If I cast out demons by Baalzebub, why do your sons *not* cast them out?"<sup>103</sup> instead of the Greek: "by whom do your sons cast them out?" (2) Verse 28 reads: "the *end* of [his] kingdom has come," instead of the Greek: "the kingdom of God has come."

The Hebrew text implies that: (1) Jesus accepts exorcisms by the power of Satan as appropriate. Turning Satan against himself is a sure way to bring Satan's kingdom to an end. Jesus asks why the Pharisees' disciples don't join in exorcising demons by the power of Satan. (2) Instead of using Baalzebub's power to defeat Satan, Jesus uses the Spirit of God, and this assures the end of Satan's kingdom. If the power of Baalzebub can bring Satan's kingdom to an end, how much more the Spirit of God.

<sup>101</sup>Cf. H. B. Green, *The Gospel according to Matthew* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975) 127: "If Jesus' exorcisms show him to be in league with the devil, he is using Satan's power against Satan's own agents, and this is a situation that cannot continue."

<sup>102</sup>Cf. David Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew* (London: Oliphants, 1972) 216: "The sons of the Pharisees (i.e., their disciples or pupils) would be the first to condemn the intransigent attitude shown to Jesus because it implied that they were in league with Satan."

<sup>103</sup>Converse constructions such as this may be related to the targumic device of converse translation. See Michael L. Klein, "Converse Translations: A Targumic Technique," *Biblica* 57 (1976): 515-37. For other examples compare  $\epsilon\iota$  in Mark 8:12 and  $\pi\alpha\rho\varsigma$ ,  $\epsilon\iota$   $\mu\eta$  in Mark 8:14 and  $\pi\alpha\rho\varsigma$ ,  $\delta\pi\iota\sigma\theta\epsilon\nu$  /  $\xi\mu\pi\rho\sigma\theta\epsilon\nu$  at Matt 15:23<sup>ms</sup>,  $\sigma\upsilon\kappa$  (Codex B) at Matt 12:32, and the absence of  $\sigma\upsilon\kappa$  in P<sup>66</sup> at John 9:27. For other examples in Shem-Tob vis-à-vis the Greek see 10:17 and 19:22.

2. The pericope on the Canaanite woman, found in Matt 15:21-28, presents the reader with a problem. Jesus' response to his disciples' plea to send the woman away is inappropriate. The text reads: "And his disciples came and begged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she is crying after us.' He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'" (vss 23-24). One expects Jesus to offer some justification for why he does not (or will not) send the woman away. But, the reason he gives is why he *should* send her away, namely he has been sent to the Jews, not the Gentiles. Jesus' answer is thus unresponsive.

This problem does not exist in the Hebrew text. In it the disciples ask: "Why do you abandon this woman who is crying out after us?" Rather than requesting Jesus to send the woman away, the disciples inquire why he does not give her some attention. Jesus' response is now appropriate. "They did not send me except to the lost sheep from the house of Israel." Jesus does not give the woman attention, because he was sent only to the Jewish people.

There are many such passages in Shem-Tob's Matthew where the Hebrew text differs from the Greek. The following is a partial listing of these passages.

- |       |        |  |
|-------|--------|--|
| 19:6  | Greek  | What therefore God has joined together,<br>let not man put asunder.  |
|       | Hebrew | Whatever the creator has joined together<br>man is <i>unable</i> to separate.  |
| 19:22 | Greek  | When the young man heard this<br>he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.   |
|       | Hebrew | It came to pass when the young man heard<br>he went away angry because he did <i>not</i> have much property.   |
| 19:29 | Greek  | And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or<br>fathers or mothers or children or lands, for my name's sake,<br>will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.  |
|       | Hebrew | Everyone who leaves his house (and his brothers), also his<br>sisters, his father, his mother, <i>his wife</i> , and his children for my<br>name will receive (a hundred) like them and will inherit the<br>kingdom of heaven. |
| 26:13 | Greek  | Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the<br>whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of <i>her</i> .  |
|       | Hebrew | Truly, I say to you, everywhere this gospel . . . is proclaimed<br>in all the world, that which this one has done will be said in<br>reference to <i>my</i> memory.  |
| 28:6  | Greek  | Come, see the place where he <i>lay</i> .  |
|       | Hebrew | Come, therefore, and see the place where the lord <i>arose</i> .   |

In some instances, a difference between the canonical text and Shem-Tob can be traced to Hebrew variants. Whether the variants reflect scribal error,



committed during the transmission of the Hebrew text, or to a primitive Hebrew substratum, echoed by the Greek, cannot be determined at this point in time.

In 8:21, the Greek reads: "Another [ἄλλος] of his disciples"; the Hebrew reads: "One [אחד] of his disciples." The Greek corresponds to אחד in Hebrew, differing from Shem-Tob's אחד by one letter. The confusion of א and ה is notorious in ancient Hebrew manuscripts.

In 11:5, the Greek reads: "and the poor have *good news preached* [εὐαγγελίζονται] to them." The Hebrew reads: "and the poor are *acquitted* [מתפשרים]." The Greek corresponds to מתפשרים, differing from מתפשרים by only one letter. A list of other examples is given below.

3:11 I baptize you *with water* (ἐν ὕδατι) unto repentance  
I baptize you *in the days of* (בַּיָּמִים) repentance  
Greek: with water = במים

5:4 Blessed are those who *mourn* (οἱ πενθοῦντες)  
Blessed are those who *wait* (הַחֹכִים)  
Greek: mourn = הַבּוֹכִים<sup>104</sup>

7:4 *Allow* (ἄφες) me to cast the mote out  
*Wait* (כַּחַר) for me . . . and I will cast the straw out  
Greek: allow = הָחַר

7:6 Do not give *that which is holy* (τὸ ἅγιον) to the dogs  
Do not give *holy flesh* (בֶּשֶׂר קֹדֶשׁ) to the dogs  
Greek: that which is holy = אֲשֶׁר קֹדֶשׁ

7:11 If you being evil *know* (οἶδατε) to give good gifts  
If you being evil *come* (תָּבוֹאוּ) to give good gifts  
Greek: know = תָּבִינוּ<sup>105</sup>

7:29 For he was teaching them as one having authority  
and not *as* (ὡς) their scribes  
For he was preaching to them with great power,  
not *as the rest* (כַּשָּׂאֵר) of the sages  
Greek: as = כַּאֲשֶׁר

8:26 Why are you *fearful* (δειλοί)  
Why do you *look* (תִּרְאוּ)  
Greek: fearful = תִּירָאוּ

<sup>104</sup>For πενθεῖν = בכה see Gen 23:2.

<sup>105</sup>Shem-Tob mss DE read תָּבִיאוּ.

9:34 By the *prince* (ἄρχοντι) of demons he casts out demons  
By the *name of* (בְּשֵׁם) demons he casts out demons  
Greek: by the prince = בְּשֵׁר

What did you go out to see?  
A man clothed in *soft* (μαλακοῖς) clothing  
11:8 What did you go out to see?  
. . . a man clothed in *noble* (רַבִּים) garments  
Greek: soft = רַבִּים

When it was full, they drew it up *on the shore*  
(ἐπὶ τὸν αἰγιαλόν)  
13:48 When it is full they draw it *out* (ἐξῆλθον)  
Greek: on the shore = לְחוּץ

But going he *cast* (ἐβαλεν) him into prison  
18:30 So he *brought him* (וַיִּלְכְּדוּ—mss ABDEFG) to prison  
Greek: cast him = וַיִּשְׁלִיכֵהוּ

On that day the Sadducees *came to* (προσῆλθον) him  
22:23 On that day the Sadducees *met* (קָרָא) him  
Greek: came to = קָרְבוּ

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and *stones* (λιθοβολοῦσα)  
those sent to her  
23:37 Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and *removes* (ומסלקת) those who are  
sent  
Greek: stones = ומסלקת

See that you are not *alarmed* (θροεῖσθε)  
24:6 Beware lest you become *foolish* (תִּהְיוּ כִּדְמוּיִים)  
Greek: alarmed = תִּבְהִילוּ

He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me *will betray me*  
(με παραδώσει)  
26:23 He who dips his hand with me in the dish *will sell me* (יִמְכְּרֵנִי)  
Greek: will betray me = יִמְכְּרֵנִי

*And they sang a hymn* (καὶ ὑμνήσαντες)  
and went out to the Mount of Olives  
26:30 *And they returned* (וַיָּשׁוּבוּ, mss ABEF)  
and went out to the Mount of Olives  
Greek: and they sang a hymn = וַיִּשְׁרוּ

Do you think that I am not able to *entreat my Father*  
(παρακαλέσαι τὸν πετέρα μου)

26:53 Do you not understand that I am able to *meet my enemies* (לפגוע באיִבִּי)  
Greek: to entreat my father = לפגוע באבִּי

Come see the place where the Lord *lay* (ἐκεῖτο)

28:6 Come, therefore, and see the place where the Lord *arose* (עמד)  
Greek: lay = ἔκειτο<sup>106</sup>

Sometimes Shem-Tob's text provides suggestions for the cause of variation in the synoptic parallels. Again, it is impossible to determine whether true Hebrew variants stand in the background of the synoptic variation. Several examples follow.

Matt 12:50 μου ἀδελφός

Mark 3:35 ἀδελφός μου

Luke 8:21 ἀδελφοί μου

Shem-Tob אחי

Matthew and Mark, reading the singular, "my brother," differ from Luke who reads the plural, "my brothers." Shem-Tob can be either singular or plural depending on its vocalization, whether אחי "my brother" or אחי "my brothers." It suggests the possibility that the synoptic variation was caused by a Hebrew substratum, either written or oral, which received different vocalizations in the Greek tradition.

Matt 23:31 ὅτι υἱοί ἐστε

Luke 11:48 ὑμεῖς δὲ οἰκοδομεῖτε

Shem-Tob שבנים אחם

According to Black (following Torrey) υἱοί ἐστε ("you are sons") and ὑμεῖς δὲ οἰκοδομεῖτε ("you build") go back to Aramaic אַחון בנין אחון (understanding בנין and בנין respectively).<sup>107</sup> The variants may also be explained by Shem-Tob's text. If the reading is vocalized שבנים אחם, the meaning is "you are sons." If it is vocalized שבנים אחם, the meaning is "you build."<sup>108</sup>

<sup>106</sup>In Jer 24:1 κειμένους renders מִצְרִיִּם.

<sup>107</sup>Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 12-13; C. C. Torrey, *Our Translated Gospels* (New York: Harper, 1936) 104.

<sup>108</sup>The subject pronoun following the participle is common in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. See 12:36, 14:2, 17:12, 18:10, 23. The variation of the roots בן and בנה occurs in Bab. Tal. Berakot 64a, a midrash employing an 'al tigre reading based on Isa 54:13: "The disciples of the wise increase peace in the world, as it says, 'And all your children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children.'" Read not 'your children' (בניך) but 'your builders' (בנין). The antiquity of the variant is confirmed by the occurrence in MT of Isa 54:13 and בניך in IQIsa<sup>a</sup>. See further 185, above.

Matt 21:12 ἐξέβαλεν

Mark 11:15 ἐκβάλλειν

Luke 19:45 ἐκβάλλειν

John 2:14-15 εὔρεν . . . ἐξέβαλεν

Shem-Tob ימצא

In the pericope on cleansing the temple, the three synoptics read "cast out." Shem-Tob reads "found." The Gospel of John reads "found" and "cast out." The duplicate form in John may be explained as a conflation of similar Hebrew words that stood in a hypothetical oral or written substratum of the gospel tradition. ἐκβάλλειν, "to cast out," corresponds to מצא in the hiphil binyon<sup>109</sup> and closely resembles Shem Tob's מצא, "found." In diagram form, the variants appear as follows:

ימצא "found"	Shem-Tob, John <sup>a</sup>
יוצא "cast out"	Matt, Mark, Luke, John <sup>b</sup> . <sup>110</sup>

## The Divine Name

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew employs the Divine Name, symbolized by יה (apparently an abbreviation for יהוה, "the Name"). The Name occurs 19 times in the text. (Fully written יהוה occurs at 28:9 and is included in the nineteen.)

Usually, the Divine Name appears where the Greek reads κύριος, but twice (21:12 mss, 22:31) the Greek reads θεός, and three times the Divine Name has no correspondent in the Greek (22:32; 27:9; 28:9).

The Divine Name occurs in the following situations: (1) In quotations from the Hebrew Bible where the MT contains the Tetragrammaton. (2) In introductions to quotations. For example: 1:22, "All this was to complete what was written by the prophet according to the LORD"; 22:31, "Have you not read concerning the resurrection of the dead that the LORD spoke to you saying." (3) In such phrases as "angel of the LORD" or "house of the LORD": 2:13, "As they were going, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared unto Joseph saying"; 2:19, "It came to pass when King Herod died the angel of the LORD appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt"; 21:12, "Then Jesus entered the house of the LORD"; 28:2, "Then the earth was shaken because the angel of the LORD descended from heaven to the tomb, overturned the stone, and stood still."

<sup>109</sup>Cf. LXX and MT in 2 Chron 23:14, 29:5, 16. In Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew, the hiphil of מצא frequently occurs where ἐκβάλλειν stands in the Greek. See Matt 7:4, 5, 22, 9:25, and so forth.

<sup>110</sup>For the apocopated hiphil יוצא, see Gen 15:5; Deut 4:20.

The appearance of the Divine Name in a Christian document quoted by a Jewish polemist is interesting, to say the least. If this text were a translation of the First Gospel by Shem-Tob himself, we would expect to find *adonai* in the text where the Greek or Latin reads "the Lord." We would never expect to see the ineffable Divine Name used as a translation equivalent of κύριος or *Dominus*. I have no hesitancy in saying that the occurrence of the Divine Name in places where the canonical text lacks any reference to the Lord at all, eliminates Shem-Tob as the author of this text. *No pious Jew of the Middle Ages would have dignified a Christian text by inserting the Divine Name.*

The ineffable Divine Name is the most sacred word in the Jewish language. In medieval times, a debate arose about what to do with a heretical book that contained the Divine Name. T.šabb. 13.5 reads: "The margins and books of the minim do not save." R. José suggested that the Divine Name should be cut out and the rest of the document burned. R. Tarphon and R. Ishmael said that the books in their entirety, including the Divine Name, should be destroyed.<sup>111</sup>

Shem-Tob makes it clear that the Gospel of Matthew is a heretical writing. In the preface to his Matthean text, he writes as follows:

The author, Shem-Tob ben-Isaac ben-Shaprut, says: I have chosen to complete this my treatise which I have called Even Bohan by transcribing the books of the gospel in spite of the fact that the books are forbidden for us to read, lest the disciples should come without having sufficient practice and should drink from those waters. Nevertheless, I have chosen to transcribe them for two reasons: The first is to answer the Christians from them and especially proselytes who speak in regard to their faith but do not know the meaning of faith and explain the Scriptures of our holy law in regard to that which is contrary to the truth and contrary to their faith. In this way glory will come to the Jew who debates with them whenever he captures them in their own pit.

The second is to show to the faithful the degree of defect in these books and the errors that occur in them. By this they will know and understand the superiority and virtue of our faith to the other religions. Since the greatness of the virtue of the word is not known except by an examination of that which is contrary to it, I depend on God, blessed be He, that there come from this nothing but good since I have aimed at that which is good.

Shem-Tob recorded the Hebrew Matthew, which he considered heretical, only because he wished to teach his people how to answer questions regarding

<sup>111</sup>See Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash*, 155-57.

the Jewish religion in face of opposition from the Christian public. Using the Divine Name in this heretical text could only have caused confusion and doubt in the minds of his people. They could only have wondered what they should do with it: preserve it, destroy it? That Shem-Tob created such a problem for his people is beyond belief.

The conclusion that seems inescapable is that Shem-Tob found the Divine Name already in his gospel text, having received it from an earlier generation of Jewish tradents. He *permitted* the Divine Name to remain in the text perhaps because he was unsure himself about what to do with it.

The occurrence of the Divine Name in Shem-Tob's Matthew supports the conclusions I reached in an earlier study of the Tetragrammaton in the New Testament,<sup>112</sup> basing my observations on the use of the Divine Name in the Septuagint and in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Some pre-Christian copies of the Septuagint, for example, contain the Divine Name written into the Greek text. These include: (1) P. Fouad 266 (=Rahlfs 848), 50 BCE; the Tetragrammaton occurs in Aramaic letters;<sup>113</sup> (2) a fragmentary scroll of the Twelve Prophets in Greek from Nahal Hever (= 8 Hev XIIgr), 50 BCE-50 CE; the Tetragrammaton occurs in paleo-Hebrew letters;<sup>114</sup> (3) 4QLXX<sup>Lev</sup> (=Rahlfs 802), first century BCE; the Tetragrammaton occurs in the form of ΙΑΩ.<sup>115</sup> In my previous study, I concluded that the New Testament writers, who had access to such copies of the Septuagint, may have preserved the Tetragrammaton in their biblical quotations from the Septuagint.<sup>116</sup>

Now Shem-Tob's Matthew testifies to the use of the Divine Name in the New Testament. As argued above, it is very unlikely that Shem-Tob inserted the

<sup>112</sup>George Howard, "The Tetragram and the New Testament," *JBL* 96 (1977): 63-83; idem, "The Name of God in the New Testament," *BAR* 4 (1978): 12-14, 56; "Tetragrammaton in the New Testament," in *ABD* 6:392-93.

<sup>113</sup>Françoise Dunand, *Études de Papyrologie* (Cairo, 1971). W. G. Waddell, "The Tetragrammaton in the LXX," *JTS* 45 (1944): 158-61. George Howard, "The Oldest Greek Text of Deuteronomy," *HUCA* 42 (1971): 125-31.

<sup>114</sup>Emanuel Tov, *The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever (8 Hev XIIgr)*, The Siyal Collection 1, DJD VIII (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990). See the earlier work by D. Barthélemy, "Redécouverte d'un chaînon manquant de l'histoire de la Septante," *RB* 60 (1953): 18-29; idem, *Les devanciers d'Aquila: Première publication intégrale du text des fragments du Dodécaprophète*, VTSup 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1963).

<sup>115</sup>P. W. Skehan, "The Qumran Manuscripts and Textual Criticism," *Volume du Congrès, Strasbourg 1956*. VTSup 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1957) 148-60.

<sup>116</sup>See further P. W. Skehan, "The Divine Name at Qumran, in the Masada Scroll, and in the Septuagint," *BIOSCS* 13 (1980): 14-44; A. Pietersma, "Kyrios or Tetragram: A Renewed Quest for the Original Septuagint," in *De Septuaginta. Studies in Honour of John William Wevers on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. A. Pietersma and C. Cox (Toronto: Benben Publications, 1984) 85-101.



Divine Name into his text. No Jewish polemist would have done that. Whatever the date of this text, it must have included the Divine Name from its inception.

One final note regarding the Divine Name: Shem-Tob's Matthew shows a very conservative attitude toward its usage. The author of this text was not a radical Christian, arbitrarily supplying his gospel with the Tetragrammaton. His attitude was one of awe and respect. In fact, his use of the Divine Name corresponds to the conservative practice found in the Septuagint and in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

### Other Interesting Readings in Shem-Tob's Matthew

As a conclusion to this profile, I append here other interesting readings in Shem-Tob's text. These, contrasted with the Greek, give further indication of the differences between the two text forms.

- 3:11 Greek He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire  
Hebrew He will baptize you with the *fire of the Holy Spirit*
- 8:20 Greek And Jesus said to him: Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.  
Hebrew Jesus answered him: The foxes have holes and the birds have nests; but the Son of Man, *the Son of the virgin*, has no place to enter his head.
- 13:23 Hebrew [At the end of the parable of the sower, the following plus reading appears.]  
As for the hundred, this is the one purified of heart and sanctified of body. As for the sixty, this is the one separated from women. As for the thirty, this is the one sanctified in matrimony, in body, and in heart.
- 19:12 Greek For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.  
Hebrew Because there are eunuchs from their birth; *these are those who have not sinned*. There are eunuchs made by man and there are self-made eunuchs *who subdue their desire* for the sake of the kingdom of heaven; *these are those who enter into great prominence*.

- 23:33 Greek You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to Gehenna?  
Hebrew Serpents, seed of vipers, how will you escape the judgment of Gehenna *if you do not turn in repentance?*
- 24:40 Greek Then two men will be in the field; one is taken and one is left.  
Hebrew Then if there shall be two ploughing in a field, *one righteous and the other evil*, the one will be taken and the other left.
- 24:41 Hebrew [At the end of this verse the following plus reading appears.]  
This is because the angels at the end of the world will remove the stumbling blocks from the world and will separate the good from the evil.
- 25:13 Greek Watch, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in [Mss] which the Son of Man comes.  
Hebrew Be careful, therefore, because you know neither the day nor the hour when the *bridegroom* will come.
- 26:23 Greek He answered them: He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me.  
Hebrew He answered them: He who dips his hand with me in the dish will *sell* me. *All of them were eating from one dish. Therefore, they did not recognize him; because if they had recognized him, they would have destroyed him.*

### Summary and Conclusion

A Remarkable Hebrew text of the Gospel of Matthew appears in the fourteenth-century Jewish polemical treatise, *Even Bohan*, authored by Shem-Tob ben-Isaac ben-Shaprut. Traditionally, this text was thought to be a translation of the Latin Vulgate. It was also equated with the Hebrew versions of Matthew published in the sixteenth century by Münster and du Tillet. In neither case is this true. A comparison of Shem-Tob's Matthew with the Latin Vulgate reveals its independence from the Vulgate. A similar comparison with Münster and du Tillet shows that they are not the same.

From earliest times, the Christian community believed that Matthew was written in Hebrew/Aramaic and translated into Greek. Papias (ca. 60–130 CE) was the first to make reference to a Hebrew Matthew, and later writers, such as Irenaeus, Origen, Eusebius, Epiphanius, and Jerome allude to it or quote it. A comparison of these allusions and quotations shows that little or no relationship

exists between the Hebrew/Aramaic Matthew preserved by the Christian Church and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew.

Jewish writings of the Middle Ages allude to or quote a Hebrew Matthew of the Shem-Tob type. These writings include the Talmud, the Book of Nestor, the Tol'doth Yeshe, the Milhamot HaShem by Jacob ben Reuben, Sepher Joseph Hamekane by Rabbi Joseph ben Nathan Official, and the Nizzahon Vetus.

A conclusion that can be drawn from these comparisons is that Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew predates the fourteenth century, being preserved primarily by the Jewish community.

Further evidence that Shem-Tob did not create his Matthew is as follows:

1. His text as a whole is unlike the Byzantine Greek text current in his day (or any Greek text known) and unlike the Latin Vulgate. If Shem-Tob had made a fresh translation, he would most certainly have rendered one of these text forms.
2. Shem-Tob's polemical comments, scattered throughout his text, suggest that he did not create it. He criticizes the text's selection of vocabulary and the mistakes it has accrued during transmission. He also bases some of his arguments on the text's unique readings.
3. His Hebrew Matthew has a sporadic relationship with some texts that were lost in antiquity, then rediscovered since the fourteenth century. These include Q, Codex Sinaiticus, the Old Syriac version, and the Coptic Gospel of Thomas. Shem-Tob hardly had access to these sources.

Stylistically, Shem-Tob's text of Matthew is written in Biblical Hebrew with a healthy mixture of Mishnaic Hebrew and later rabbinic vocabulary and idiom. It is unpolished in style and contains a number of later scribal revisions. It is characterized by puns, word connections, and alliteration. These devices are numerous—the text is saturated with them—and belong to the structure of the Hebrew.

In regard to theology, Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is heretical according to the standard of traditional Christianity. It never identifies Jesus with the Messiah. John the Baptist is given an exalted role (even takes on messianic traits), similar to the one polemized against in the Gospel of John and the Pseudo-Clementine Writings. Shem-Tob's text envisions the salvation of the Gentiles only in the Messianic era. It reflects a lesser disparity between Judaism and Christianity than the Greek or Latin canonical texts. Finally, Shem-Tob's text employs the Hebrew Divine Name, symbolized by "יה" (apparently an abbreviation for יהוה, "the Name") where the canonical version simply uses the word "Lord."

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